

THE GREAT WAR IN 1914



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A SKETCH OF THE OPERATIONS IN EUROPE
AND ASIA, WITH SOME REFLEXIONS AND
OBSERVATIONS

BY

LT.-COL. F. R. SEDGWICK

C.M.G., D.S.O.

ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY

SOMETIME PROFESSOR OF ARTILLERY, TACTICS, AND MILITARY HISTORY
AT THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF CANADA

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PREFACE

THE most pugnacious, ferocious, and cruel of the animals of prey is Man. Whereas most animals of prey only kill for food and—with the possible exception of the cat and the weasel tribes—do not delight in inflicting pain on their victims, Man (and Woman) rejoice in inflicting pain both bodily and mental upon their fellows. Torture is unknown to the most savage beast. In the name of liberty, in the name of some political creed such as Socialism or the Divine Right of kings, in the name of Religion, men have from time immemorial slain and tortured one another. In the sacred name of sport, torture and suffering are inflicted on animals.

Owing to the social conditions which the intelligence of Man has created, the savage instincts are kept in check, and consequently modified in certain surroundings, but even in the most civilized and orderly communities an outbreak of savagery, such as a war with another political organization, is not infrequent and, curiously enough, not unwelcome—at the outbreak.

The late war was welcomed with enthusiasm in Germany as also in Russia and Austria. Even in civilized France and Britain there was no reluctance to engage. The end of the war, with the horrors and miseries it has brought in its train, has again set people trying to find a preventative from these spasmodic recurrences to primitive savagery.

In my opinion such a preventative will be found rather in the study and comprehension of psychology than in Leagues of Nations. Antidotes to most bodily diseases have now been discovered; perhaps in centuries to come psychological study may discover antidotes to mental diseases. Who can tell?

Meanwhile, however, we live in a world ever subject to recurrences of passionate excitement among peoples. The

sinister figure of the Press overshadows us. Even at this moment the newspapers of Britain, France, the United States, and Italy are engaged in sowing dissension among the late Allies. There are papers in America deliberately trying to provoke enmity and, if possible, war between Britain and the United States. Here, in Britain, we have witnessed on more than one occasion bitter campaigns against the Government, conducted by one section of the Press, for motives which the man in the street suspected were sometimes more personal than patriotic.

So long as the Press only echoes the opinions of the people, it is a power for good, but when it attempts to warp public opinion it becomes a grave danger to the welfare of the nation and to the security of the world.

If a great newspaper, or group of newspapers, even in Britain, decided that it was "good business" to stir up strife, it is to be feared that they would probably succeed in time.

It is perhaps a pity that in government, press, commercial and trade union circles their superior pushfulness and mental suppleness, coupled sometimes with intellectual fickleness, have placed the leadership in our public affairs in the hands of men of Scottish, Irish, Welsh and Jewish racial strains almost eliminating that solid English element which contributed so much to the reputation of Britain for integrity.

I have in mind an extreme instance of what newspapers could do. I now make the suggestion to the advocates of the League of Nations that the first and most important action of the League must be to induce a control of the public press, to prevent bad blood being stirred up by sensation-mongers, men suffering personal pique, or even holding firm conviction. The unbridled freedom of the Press is a curse in these matters, not a blessing.

Meanwhile we live in a bad world in which war is in progress at the moment, and may flare up again even in Western Europe, with a little fanning of the flames. Now what is war? War is an act of policy. If a nation does

not want war it must have a peaceful policy. Even the most peaceful policy may, however, require assertion at times. Furthermore, we live, as I say, in a bad world, and therefore must be prepared to have to defend our policy. Our preparations for war, then, depend on our policy. The size and distribution and direction of our armed forces are a matter of policy, and it therefore behoves every man—and woman—to understand something of war—that is, of the great principles of war—so that they may be able to judge for themselves whether our military preparations are about adequate or apparently excessive. For instance, everyone should have some idea of what the defence of, let us say, Palestine, or Armenia, would mean before suggesting that we should undertake liabilities in those directions.

To get any real comprehension of such matters it is necessary to study the history of war. If such history is studied properly, the problems which war presents become clearer. The late war is particularly interesting. The British Empire raised some six or seven million troops during the war. Her pre-war preparations were, as it seems, inadequate, for about one million was the extreme limit of her actual resources before the war. At first sight it looks as if our preparations were ridiculously inadequate. I trust that I have been able to show in this book that this view of our pre-war preparations is a shallow one, and that had the troops of our allies and of ourselves been properly employed, *had our pre-war strategy for which statesmen are responsible been sound*, then we should have been saved much distress and loss.

I have tried to cut out all unessentials in the narrative of events. It is much easier in recounting so momentous a series of events to write fully. It is very difficult to cut down the narrative. I hope that in cutting I have not obscured events of importance and have not been guilty of serious inaccuracies. Some inaccuracies I fear there are bound to be.

F. R. SEDGWICK.

July 1920.



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THE GREAT WAR IN 1914

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

So much has been written of various phases and aspects of the Great War of 1914-1918 that one is inclined to lose a sense of perspective when talking and thinking about it. It is the purpose of this small book to try to describe the purely military events without touching upon tactical details, and especially to try to place those events in a proper perspective. Every effort has been made to do justice to the superb fighting qualities and leadership of the Germans. We are just beginning now to get the truth about many matters of which we were ignorant during the war. True, it is still well-nigh impossible to get accurate details of some periods, particularly of Russian and Austrian movements and numbers and their losses. Even these may be available in time. But French, German, and British details are rapidly coming to light. Unfortunately German military writers are following the stupid old habit, which seems to have become engrained in them, of claiming perfection for their Army from top to bottom. One would suppose that mistakes were never made by them. They do not mention their defeats: their official accounts only record their numerous victories. Such a thing as the Mesopotamian Report, and the Dardanelles Report, are not possible in Germany. This is due to a mental outlook which we British cannot understand and never will understand. The Germans simply do not believe in telling the truth, the whole truth,

and nothing but the truth, nor do they believe that other people do so. It follows, then, that absolute accuracy is not yet possible in a history of the war, and that some phases may never be cleared up at all.

The war, as all the world knows, broke out with an unprovoked attack by Austria on Serbia at the end of July 1914. Russia mobilized to protect Serbia, and Germany mobilized on Austria's side. As France was allied to Russia, this meant war with France, who also mobilized. Italy, though allied to Germany and Austria, stood aside, and remained neutral, for she was not bound by the treaty to assist aggression by her allies.

The war might for a time have been confined to these Powers, but Germany foolishly ignored the neutrality of Belgium, which brought in against her Belgium and the British Empire. It is constantly said by British statesmen and soldiers that Britain came into the war to save herself. The statement is not true. There was a strong peace party in England. Had Germany not invaded Belgium, in all probability Britain would have remained, at any rate for a time, a neutral, sympathetic to France, but not actively interfering. Whether that attitude would have lasted long is doubtful. But the plain fact is that Britain entered the war because Belgium was invaded.

THE CAUSES OF THE WAR

The causes of the war are not far to seek, but cannot be elaborated here. Briefly it may be said that Germany came late into the group of industrialized States. Her people, however, showed remarkable aptitude for industrialism, so that by 1914 she had become the most formidable industrial State in the world, and bade fair ere long to be the wealthiest. To place their industrial position on secure foundations, all Germans imagined that areas of the world from which come the raw materials of industry should belong to them. They desired to possess markets for the disposal of their

manufactures. Finally, they aspired to possession of areas of the world where white colonists can settle and develop daughter States. Such areas Britain, France, Russia, and the United States possessed already, when Germany awoke to her might and strength. Thus Germany found no path to colonial possessions and dependencies. In one area, the Turkish Empire, she had, it is true, tried to find an outlet, but it must be admitted that British policy, inspired by the selfish jealousy of "vested financial interests," and of fear for India, had thwarted German aspirations in this direction too. In the scramble for bits of Africa she had come in a bad third; and when in 1902 the British Empire completed the extension of its possessions in Africa by conquering the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, there was now no more land to be got in Africa, unless Spain, Portugal, or Belgium could be induced to part with some of theirs. South America was barred by the United States, by whose side it was certain that Britain would be found in any war. That the value to the possessor of external territories was greatly exaggerated by the Germans is beside the point. For instance, most Germans firmly believed that India and Egypt pay a yearly tribute to Britain. But Britain and France and Russia were obviously all eager to extend their possessions, and one cannot be surprised that the proud, warlike, and industrious people of Germany were exasperated at finding their path to similar possessions blocked. It is not altogether surprising that Germany felt herself ringed about with enemies. In such circumstances nations, like individuals, do not reason coolly.

The Austrian ambitions are not so easy to state shortly. She felt a natural desire to make her position strong in the Balkans, but, unlike her ally, the reasons which worked upon the policy of her statesmen were racial and political rather than industrial and financial. Half her population was Southern Slav, and the free Southern Slav States across her border should, she felt, be bound by political ties to Austria.

There were other circumstances, however, which assisted to make the war possible. First and foremost among these was the remarkable mental outlook of the Germans. For two generations this people had been taught to believe in their invincibility in war, and superiority to all others in the arts of peace, until the whole people seem to have really believed. Abraham Lincoln said that it is not possible to fool all the people all the time, yet in Germany this seems to have been done. Only a people entirely lacking in a sense of humour could have responded to the remarkable education which the Germans received. The peculiarity of the German outlook is well illustrated in the works of a man of partly Scottish descent, one Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who lived in Germany and wrote in German and in French. His book, *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, is a work of great interest, showing immense learning and erudition. Herr Chamberlain proves to his own satisfaction that all that is worth having or knowing in the world has come to us from peoples who were of the same blood as the modern German. He even makes out a case to prove that David and Jesus were of the same blood as the Germans. Could absurdity go further? Yet his teachings were fully accepted in Germany. In every conceivable way—by education, by the writings of learned and unlearned men, by philosophers who taught that might is right, by distorted history, by the preachings of divines, by the vapouring of the journalists, by the writings of soldiers, and the advice of commercial men, in the schoolroom, on the stage—the “cult” of innate German superiority was taught, and it was believed in. All nations have, like most individuals, mistaken estimates of themselves; witness the fond belief of the British that they are a people peculiarly set apart to put in order and govern the rest of the world, and that their rule is universally for the good of their subjects. Other queer British beliefs about themselves in some cases peculiar to the class, educated in the well-known mill—private school and public

school, Oxford or Cambridge—might be cited. The French, and the Americans too, have their own peculiar ideas of themselves, which other people do not share. It behoves us all therefore not to cast too large a stone at the Germans for their mistaken estimates of themselves. At any rate their belief in their destiny caused them to put up a great struggle, and led their armies to many a victory.

Many subsidiary causes of the war are also traceable. The greed and venality of commercial and financial interests, particularly in Germany. The vanity of individuals, such as the German Emperor, the German princes, and soldiers. It is impossible to elaborate all these causes here. It is sufficient to be clear that war was not in any way unexpected, and that all the great Powers of Europe had in their several degrees made themselves ready to battle. The two Powers best prepared in their respective methods were Germany and Britain, and here we must interpolate a note about the naval situation, which will not be again discussed.

THE COMMAND OF THE SEAS

Owing to the existence of the Kiel Canal, Germany was able to ensure complete control of the Baltic. In all the other seas of the world except the Black Sea, the British were absolutely supreme from early days in the war. This complete control was unique in history. Many stupid attacks have been made on the British Admiralty, some by persons who should know better, for to err is human, and even the officials of the Admiralty and British naval officers are human. The bald fact is that troop movements were never interfered with throughout the war, and for a long time even merchant traffic was hardly interfered with. The improved submarines built during the war were used, by the British to interfere with German control in the Baltic, and by the Germans to interfere with British control in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. The new weapon was finally mastered. Had the war lasted but a few months

longer, the submarine would probably have been rendered almost useless for the purpose for which it was chiefly used, that is for attack on merchant shipping and troop transportation. Nothing more will be said in this work of the naval situation, except where the naval forces co-operated directly with the land forces. Few realize what the work of the Navy was, nor how all-important was its share in finally bringing Germany to her knees.

MILITARY STRENGTH OF THE CENTRAL EMPIRES

GERMANY had a population of 65,000,000, of whom some 10,000,000 would be males available for military service in some capacity or other.

The annual contingent of recruits was about 550,000, of whom only some 275,000 were taken for the Army and 22,000 for the Navy. Of the balance about 40,000 were definitely medically unfit, and the rest were not trained, but were available for the various classes of Reserve and second-line troops. In a period of four years, then, another 2,000,000 would become available for military service. The military organization consisted of twenty-five army corps (including three Bavarian). Each army corps consisted of two divisions. Each division contained four regiments, each of three battalions, total 12,000 bayonets. In each corps area sufficient cadre troops were known to exist to form so-called "Ersatz" brigades, and other reserve formations. Behind the Active and Reserve formations stood the Landwehr, consisting of men from twenty-eight to thirty-nine years of age organized in brigades, and behind that the Landsturm, consisting of men from forty to forty-five years of age.

There were 110 regiments of cavalry.

Some features of the German organization are to be noted. Each army corps had one or more cavalry regiments. Each regiment of infantry had a machine-gun company, and besides this there were a few special com-

panies of machine guns. Each division had seventy-two field pieces (fifty-four 77-mm. guns and eighteen 105-mm. howitzers). This is more or less the same as the British organization. But, in addition, each army corps had four 4-gun batteries of 150-mm. howitzers, and affiliated to each army there were a certain number of regiments of foot artillery armed with 150 mm., and a few 210-mm., howitzers. Thus the Germans were superior to the French in their equipment both of machine guns and of heavy artillery, and to the British in heavy howitzers, and, though to a less degree, in machine guns also.

There were eighteen battalions of light infantry in the Army, which worked for the most part with the cavalry. We have observed that the twenty-five army corps had behind them very large reserves of trained and partially trained officers and men. As a matter of fact the extent of their preparations seems to have surprised the Allies. From the very first Germany was able to put in the field a certain number, fourteen to begin with, of Reserve Corps, equipped and organized exactly like the Active Corps, and these Reserve Corps proved every bit as good as the Active Corps. That their Landwehr and Ersatz formations would follow up the Active Corps was fully realized, but the extent to which they utilized Reserve formations from the outset was somewhat of a surprise.

The Air Service preparations were on an extensive scale, but too much reliance was placed on the airship.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY had a population of about 50,000,000 all told. Of these 15,000,000 were German Austrians, and under 10,000,000 were Hungarian Magyars. The remaining 25,000,000 were mainly of Slav blood. Some of these were definitely hostile to Austrian and Hungarian rule. A large proportion were of the same blood and language as the Serbs, to coerce whom Austria-Hungary actually declared war. Not only were these peoples unlikely to have much heart in a war against men of their own race, but the political conditions in Bohemia, and Croatia, had

been very unstable for some years. A very large part of the population then, if not actively disloyal, was not actively loyal. Further it is a fact to be clear about that the fighting value of many of the Austro-Hungarian peoples has never stood high. For centuries the Austrian armies had been almost universally unsuccessful.

The system of service was practically the same as that of Germany. The organization of the Army need not be studied here in detail. Briefly, there was a common army, and a separate Austrian Landwehr and Hungarian Landwehr. There were sixteen army corps and forty-two cavalry régiments of the common army formed in peace. The war strength of an Austrian corps, however, unlike the German, consisted of three divisions (two common army and one of Landwehr), and it was as such that they took the field in 1914. The artillery of an Austrian division was not so numerous as that of a German division. Only twenty-four field guns and twelve field howitzers belonged to the division. Several divisions, for instance those of the XVth and XVIth Corps, were armed with mountain artillery. To each army corps were allotted a certain number of regiments of heavy artillery.

THE MILITARY STRENGTH OF THE ALLIES

FRANCE had a population of about 40,000,000, but in addition to this home population there were available and close at hand the loyal and warlike populations of Northern Africa. The French military system made all men available for the Active Army and Reserve from nineteen to thirty, for the Territorial Army from thirty to thirty-six, and the Territorial Reserve from thirty-seven to forty-five years of age.

An annual contingent of recruits was about 310,000, of whom nearly 60,000 would be unfit or excused service, a far larger proportion than in Germany. Practically all the rest were required for the Army and Navy, so that France had no vast reservoirs of untrained men like Germany ; but

as we have pointed out, such a reservoir was available—in time—in the coloured population of North Africa.

The army organization was a little peculiar. There were two armies, the Home and the Colonial. A portion of the colonial army was stationed in France. It found the “Colonial Corps” stationed in France and several mixed brigades. There were, including the Colonial Corps, twenty-two corps, but the 19th Corps, stationed in Algeria, was used in separate divisions. In Africa there were a considerable number of troops which would soon be available in France if their passage was assured by naval control of the Mediterranean.

A French division, like a German, consisted of two brigades of two regiments each of three battalions, with an artillery regiment. But the French artillery was less numerous than the German. A regiment of field artillery consisted of thirty-six or forty-eight of the famous 75-mm. guns. There were no field howitzers at all, such as Germany, Britain, and Austria possessed. The only mobile heavy artillery was twenty-four batteries (ninety-six pieces) of the long 155-mm. Rimalho gun.

On mobilization each army corps was reinforced by a reserve brigade consisting as it would seem of two regiments each of two battalions. As very detailed “Orders of Battle,” such as have been issued by Britain and Germany, have never been issued by France, it is not easy to be sure of the details of organization as they actually worked out in practice. However, it is certain that some corps did have these reserve brigades attached on mobilization. The infantry strength of a French corps was then larger than that of a German corps, but its artillery strength was much inferior, although to each corps a regiment of field artillery, additional to the divisional artillery, was allotted. Each of the twenty-one army corps districts formed, on mobilization, a Reserve Division. These divisions were numbered from 51st to 72nd. They consisted at first of two brigades each of two regiments each of two battalions, and had a regiment of

artillery of apparently thirty-six guns. The Reserve Divisions were assigned independently to armies, or grouped in twos and threes. In one or two cases they were assigned to fortresses.

Behind the Active and Reserve formations stood the Territorials. Very insufficient preparations existed to place them on a war footing. They were used as garrison troops, and as line-of-communication troops. From early days some battalions were organized into divisions, but they proved of very inferior fighting value because of the weakness of the cadre. Compared with the German the French Air Service was weak. In other directions too, such as provision of good uniforms, supplies, and material of war of all sorts, the French preparations were most inadequate.

In one particular only were the French superior to the Germans. That was in the possession of the excellent little 75-mm. field gun, the most accurate and most rapid-firing field gun in the world.

RUSSIA had made considerable improvements in her organization since her unfortunate experience in her war with Japan. The population of Russia was about 175,000,000. The system of military service was not unlike that of other European States. That is to say, all males were liable to be called to the colours in different categories according to their age. An annual contingent of recruits was over 1,000,000, and of these less than a half were required for training.

Thus Russia disposed of an even more vast reservoir of untrained men than did Germany.

The Army was organized in thirty-seven army corps each on mobilization consisting of two active and one Reserve divisions of infantry and one cavalry division. Except the five Siberian corps, an infantry division mustered sixteen battalions, compared with the German,¹ French, and British twelve battalions. The artillery organization was

¹ A German division had in addition a pioneer battalion. But French and British had engineer troops attached to each division.

weak. An infantry division had only forty-eight field guns, and each army corps had sixteen field howitzers. There were available only seven regiments each of twelve pieces of heavy field artillery. There were a number of horse artillery batteries, principally Cossack, and a few batteries of pack artillery. The cavalry amounted to 200 regiments, 70 regular, and 130 Cossack. Cavalry divisions were formed partly of regulars, partly of Cossacks, but there were a number of independent Cossack brigades. The Cossacks proved in this, as in previous wars, to be of inferior fighting quality.

SERBIA had recently been engaged in two wars which, though successful, had been a severe drain on her manhood and resources. But the *moral* of her army had been raised to a high pitch by her successes.

The population was rather less than 4,000,000. Service in the Army was obligatory. The organization was very loose. Actually twenty-four squadrons and 200 battalions (much under the normal strength of 1,000) with a fair proportion of artillery mobilized. These were formed into twelve so-called divisions, and a cavalry division, besides frontier troops. The figures of actual strength are not easy to find out.

In addition to the original belligerents, Germany's decision to violate the neutrality of Belgium brought in against her two more States.

BELGIUM was exceedingly badly prepared for war. Her army was in course of reorganization. It will be sufficient to realize that Belgium was actually able to put into the field five strong but ill-armed divisions, a cavalry division, and fairly adequate garrison troops for Liège, Namur, and Antwerp. The political constitution and a short-sighted, namby-pamby sentimental type of so-called "international" socialism had sapped the strength of Belgium for many years.

BRITAIN was in a nearly perfect state of preparation for war. Unfortunately, as it proved, her preparations for

war on land were on a not quite adequate scale. As a matter of fact this inadequacy was not quite so great as is popularly—almost invariably—supposed, as we hope to make apparent in the course of this book. The Navy was ready—and carried out the task for which the British nation pays a vast annual insurance premium, with complete success.

The Army was trained and equipped to perfection, so far as the parsimony of politicians, on the look-out for votes, would allow. It was a voluntary-service army. Only the Americans and Chinese, besides the British, refuse to admit that it is a duty of the citizen to prepare himself in peace to defend his fatherland in war. The men were a fine average of British manhood; the N.C.O.s as splendid a body of men as can be found in the world. The officers, for the most part poor or of very moderate means, were devoted to their profession and hard working. In intellect and education they were above the average of their class.

The British Army then was small. There were available in Great Britain only six divisions and a cavalry division with not very adequate reserves. Abroad there were the garrisons of the foreign possessions, of which the most considerable was that of India, where, approximately, 75,000 white and 175,000 native troops were stationed. The native troops, however, suffered from having a very weak British cadre, a fact which, as it proved, made them unequal to the strain of European war. Behind the Regulars stood fourteen weak Territorial divisions, with a number of Yeomanry regiments organized in brigades. As the Territorials and Yeomanry were officered only by "amateurs," the force was not at all "level" in the value of its different units. Many of the amateur soldiers were as good as or better than the average regular, but many, and those often in the higher ranks, were inefficient. It was considered that the Territorials were not fit to take the field without several months of training.

The Air Service was weak owing to the difficulty of getting

money. The supply of machine guns proved inadequate, but was nearly equal proportionately to that of the German army. The artillery was armed with the 18-pr. gun, the longest-ranging and hardest-hitting field gun in the world, and with the 4·5-in. howitzer, the most powerful light field howitzer. Each division had a battery of 60-pr. (5-in.) guns. It is to be regretted that a few batteries of 6-in. howitzers were not also provided. The musketry training and the tactical training of the infantry were certainly superior to that of any other Power.

Immediately available, then, there were only one strong cavalry division and six infantry divisions. But when one thinks of the enormous power which stood behind that little army, an army which the German Emperor described as “contemptible,” one is the more amazed that Germany should have dared to provoke the youth of a race which, whatever its faults, has never proved backward in war. Not only were there peoples of British blood whose numbers totalled over 16,000,000, who owned allegiance to the Crown of Britain, but in every quarter of the world were Britons who might be expected to rally to the colours at the first sound of the trumpets of war. That they did so nobly we all know.

Nothing will be said about the material resources of the belligerents, because they are well known.

SOME MILITARY PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS

It is thought advisable to insert here a few words on the subject of military terms and certain strategic principles.

Strategy is the art of placing armies in the field and moving them so as to be best placed for battle. *Tactics* is the art of handling troops in battle. Tactics begin where strategy leaves off. The best strategy is well-nigh useless without tactical success. Tactics change from age to age, almost from year to year. The great principles of strategy never

change, but the art of applying these principles must be modified to suit the changing conditions of tactics.

War is an expression of national policy, so that the *plan of campaign* is prepared by the statesmen who guide the policy of a country. But as they cannot be expected to understand military details of staff work and so forth, they call to their councils soldiers and sailors as advisers. Responsibility for the plan to be adopted is, and must always be, borne by the heads of the Government.

There are three great Principles of Strategy. First, "It is impossible to be too strong at the decisive point." Second, "Try to mystify, mislead, and surprise your enemy." Third, "When you have determined on your course of action you must carry it through by force of energy and will," "You must impose your will on the enemy."

Now let us consider the first of these principles a little. What do we mean by superiority? what do we mean by "the decisive point"?

Superiority may be superiority of numbers, or superiority in moral and fighting value. Superior numbers may be collected at a point by superior initial organization due to careful pre-war strategy, or to superior mobility due to better means of communication, or simply to better marching power. An army so placed that it can concentrate more rapidly on any point of its front than the enemy can concentrate, is said to hold the "Interior Lines."

The decisive point is a matter for choice by the general after he has been informed of the Plan of Campaign, but as often as not the Plan of Campaign itself decides the point at which decision must be sought. But it is clear that the side which first moves, which has, as we say, "seized the initiative," will have the choice of the point on which it seeks a decision. The other side must, at any rate at first, conform to its movements until by tactical success, or superior mobility, it has itself gained the initiative.

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the second great principle, which is a quoted saying of the great

American soldier, Stonewall Jackson. Surprise leads to "moral" gain, which in itself counts for much. It is impossible to overrate the importance of surprising your enemy.

The necessity for going right through with your plan in order to achieve full success was very well expressed in the saying of Scharnhorst quoted by Clausewitz, and from him quoted again and again. "In war it does not matter so much what one decides to do, as that what is decided on is carried through with vigour and determination." It follows that before one undertakes an operation of war one should try to be as sure as possible that one really has the force necessary to carry it through.¹ This is a matter where the soldier's advice in the preparation of a plan of campaign becomes of such importance.

From the axiom that one must go right through with any measure undertaken, that half measures are fatal, arises the corollary that Unity of Command is of vital importance. None of the military writers of the past have failed to point this out. From this too follows the maxim that the general must not be interfered with from home by civilians or statesmen. From this too arises the dislike of "Councils of War."

The vulnerable point of an army is obviously its communication with its base. The best way to reach an enemy's line of communications is round the flank, and if this can be reached, the force which is thus favourably situated strategically is also ideally placed for a tactical success. At the same time it is possible to reach the enemy's line of communications by breaking through his front.

It follows from the principle that it is impossible to be too strong at the decisive point that all *detachments* are unsound. Yet some are necessary; for instance, to guard a fortress, to besiege a fortress, to reinforce a threatened ally, to attack a point of political and moral importance,

¹ The Dardanelles and Kut at once spring to mind.

to watch a doubtful neighbour. The strategical value of such a detachment depends on the answer to the question, Does it draw off from the decisive point an equal or superior hostile strength? if it does not the detachment should probably not be made.

When the plan of campaign is settled and the army detailed to carry it out, the general in command will settle on the "zone of strategic concentration," and from this zone he will move forward to the "zone (or line) of strategic deployment." He may deploy his army in line, or in echelon with a wing or the centre advanced, or in several other shapes. Napoleon generally adopted a shape like a diamond. In front went an advanced guard with a wing army echeloned on each flank. In rear of the centre was his Reserve including the Imperial guard.

The importance of the psychological factor in an army called "*moral*" cannot be overestimated. This factor is an intangible one and difficult to describe, but is known to all soldiers. The moral effects of early success, of good discipline, of a good cause, and of good arrangements for food and hygiene, and above all of the personality of the general, are incalculable. If the general is beaten it does not matter if his army is successful. The importance of the general is as great to-day as ever it was. "*L'armée n'est rien que par la tête.*"

No attempt will be made at this point to discuss pre-war strategy, which is so closely interwoven with politics, nor to speak of the value of fortresses and fortified areas, for we shall note their use in this war as we study the events.

A SHORT COMPARISON OF THE FIGHTING QUALITIES AND THEORIES OF WAR OF THE BELLIGERENTS

Germany, France, and Britain were indeed three mighty opponents. Centuries of glorious tradition hung behind them and were taught in their schools. These are the three most warlike races of the world, and always have been,

and from their loins have sprung other races as warlike. But whereas the people of Britain and of France have always had a tradition of honour and chivalry in the making of war, the tradition of the Germans has always made war horrible, savage, and bestial. Let anyone read the accounts of the Civil War in England, and then of the Thirty Years War in Germany fought about the same time, if they want to see how differently Englishmen and Germans settle their quarrels. Never were losses in battle more severe, never were fewer "horrors of war" inflicted on the civilian than in England in the Great Rebellion. The medal is reversed when one reads the disgusting horrors of the Thirty Years War.

No one can fail to be struck by this difference between the two races, for the people of Northern France and of Britain are really one race in blood, and even in temperament, though linguistic differences have modified their likeness. Their affinity of blood is much closer than that of Britain and the United States. Nevertheless the German is a fine fighting man, and to him must be assigned the palm for endurance of discomfort and hardships. But for that priceless military quality, capacity to take charge, often called "initiative," there is no doubt that French and Britons surpass the German. After the original highly trained German armies had disappeared in the vortex of war, the new troops which took their places in the old formations did not disclose an equal power of independent action on the battlefield to that shown by the French and British. This wonderful gift which distinguishes above others the people of Northern and Western Europe is the power which has led them to usurp the position of leaders all over the world. Zulus and Dervishes, natives of India and Arabs, know how to die bravely and suffer nobly, but lead they cannot. It was the exceptional strength of the white cadre of the French coloured battalions that made them such good fighting troops.

We may observe here that a good example of the decrease

in value of German initiative may be found in the gradually attained superiority of the Allies in the minor tactics of trench warfare, such as patrolling and sniping. In the latter days of 1914 and early in 1915 the German snipers were far superior to the British. No one who served in the fighting line in that period will deny this. The British regular army infantry was fought out. It had ceased to exist. On the other hand the Germans still possessed many trained officers, N.C.O.s, and men. Their initiative and daring as snipers are well known. If any people would have been expected to beat the German, one would think it would be the British, who pride themselves on their powers at games and all field sports. Yet the German was the better at this game. Gradually, however, a change occurred. The natural superiority and initiative of the British asserted itself as the ranks of both armies were filled with men of equally short training. Training as snipers and at patrol work was as assiduously carried out by the Germans as by the British. The superiority gained by the British troops, and particularly by the Australians and Canadians, was due to the innate superiority in individual initiative, more marked perhaps in the Australians than in any other troops. It had but little to do with field sports and games, valuable though these are as training in discipline and self-control.

The Russians and the Austro-Hungarians did not appear as first-class fighting peoples. The wealthy classes in both countries were in general effete, vicious, and uneducated, and quite untrained to realize the duties of their position. It is no exaggeration to say that four German, British, or French men are equal to ten Austrians or Russians, in the sense that 400,000 of any of the former would be more than a match for 1,000,000 Austrians or Russians.

In one particular Germany had a great moral advantage, and that was in the fact that the Germans were *convinced* of their superiority over the French, while the French were almost inclined to believe it. The cry—the foolish journalistic parrot cry—had been for years that the French

were decadent. They were said to be an immoral race. their birth-rate was declining, and so on and so forth. What arrant nonsense it all seems to everyone now ! But the odd thing is that many Frenchmen believed it. Many believed that the subversive doctrines preached so assiduously to the labouring class had spread their poison so thoroughly that patriotism was dead. This fact is of the very first *military* importance. The Germans believed themselves invincible, the French half believed in it too—at first.

MILITARY DOCTRINES AND THEORIES IN VOGUE

Never before had military doctrines and theories been so much discussed as in Europe during the twenty years preceding the Great War. The military history of past wars had been analyzed and examined from every point of view. Broadly speaking, we find that both in Germany and in France the theory of “seizing the initiative” by early and resolute attack was dominant in all schools of thought; but whereas the French admitted the possibility of manœuvre after the initial strategic deployment, at any rate by a strong reserve, the German insisted that after the initial deployment no manœuvre was possible, or at any rate advisable, until the first battle had been fought and won. The advantage of initial success is, and always has been, all-important, hence arose the German theory that every bit of weight must be made to tell at the very start. The Germans also carried to excess the doctrine of the encirclement of one or both wings of the opposing armies. To such an extent was this doctrine believed in that the voices of those who pointed out that this was after all not the only way to fight a battle were as voices crying in the wilderness.

In their peculiar German way history was made to fit the German theory. The official German histories of the wars of 1860 and 1870-1 are notoriously inaccurate. The

arrival of the Ist, IIInd, and IIIrd Armies upon the field of Königgrätz is now known to have been a lucky accident, but all history was twisted to suit. Von Schlieffen, the justly celebrated chief of the great General Staff who followed the old Moltke, and who is said to have drawn up the plan of campaign which was eventually used in this war, actually found time to write a paper on the Battle of Cannae (a famous example of encirclement by both wings), in order to support his favourite theory. As we shall see, this one dominating idea of encirclement persisted in the German leaders throughout the war. It may have arisen from constant study of the problem of war with France, but it existed, and was a definite principle, which the Germans looked upon as almost sacred.

But both sides were trained to believe that in attack, early and prompt, lay the only chance of success. We shall see how this theory marked the action of both French and Germans at the outset.

The British theory of war was certainly more sound than those theories which we chiefly find voiced in France or Germany. The brilliantly able group of men who had reformed and leavened the British Army since the South African War had formed a juster estimate of the meaning of modern weapons, as anyone can see who studies the Field Service Regulations. That the defensive is a sound form of war and admits of manœuvre was the British theory. That the offensive is necessary was well understood, but the value of defence works, when manned by troops well trained to handle their rifles, to act as a screen for the movements of an offensive reserve, was thoroughly inculcated. It was well that the proper tactical use of troops in the defence of ground was understood, for it saved the Allies in 1914.

In the tactical methods to be employed there was really but little difference if we merely study the Regulations of the armies. But in their adaptation to actual peace-training, there was all the difference in the world. The earlier battles soon showed that in peace-training the French

infantry were woefully behind the Germans and the British. The use of ground in attack and defence, the uses of the local reserves, the importance of musketry, and the necessity to use pick and shovel, were certainly not thoroughly inculcated in the French Army. The methodical preparation of an attack, the necessity to advance by bounds, the careful securing of ground gained (consolidation of the position, as it was afterwards called)—in these methods of attack the French were not trained. The Germans relied, as it proved too much, on the mass movements of their infantry. Their instruction, like that of the other nations, laid down that infantry must be kept in hand till the last moment. But this last moment seems under the German method of instruction to have been after, not before, reaching the zone of effective fire. In all these features of modern tactics the British were superior to both French and Germans, but the small size of their army and, it is to be admitted, the not very resolute leading in its first offensive operation, have caused the superiority of British tactical instruction to be overlooked.

In the cavalry arm too the French tactical instruction was in theory good, in practice weak. British and German cavalry carried a useful firearm, had learnt to use it, and could fight at need as infantry. Who has not heard the amusing story of the French cavalry who came up to support the 1st Cavalry Division on November 1st, asking for fatigue parties of British to dig their trenches for them because they had not learnt how to do this? It was said that de Lisle's answer was a wagonload of picks and shovels, and the message, "It is never too late to learn." This may be only a good story, but it arose, if it is not a true one,¹ because this view of war was really that of the French cavalry. The Germans encumbered their horsemen with so-called "Light Infantry" (Jägers). The British horse were independent. Whether on foot or mounted they

¹ The author has every reason to believe that this story is true in substance if not in detail.

proved the finest cavalry in the field. Their fights as infantry particularly from October 1st to November 1st, and their fights (only too few) on horseback, both showed this.

In artillery the French had placed their whole reliance in their good little 75-mm. They had not learnt the lesson of past wars. In this matter the Germans were superior to the British as well as the French. But in artillery tactics there was but little difference between the armies. The French ideas, some of which proved impracticable, because of the ammunition expenditure involved, were, however, somewhat in advance of both German and British. In the pre-war training of the French artillery we find the germ of the great tactical idea, "the barrage."

But if the French had a superior artillery tactic to that of Germany and Britain, it is still true that neither they nor anyone else had grasped the necessity for accurate gunnery, and of shooting by the map. This is a very remarkable fact. When one realizes the perfection to which coast-defence gunnery had been brought before the war, by the coast-defence schools, one is the more amazed that the horse and field schools had failed to grasp its essential value.

In the great duty of liaison between artillery and infantry, no army was at first superior to any other. But whereas in the French Army the artillery arm was treated with friendliness by the infantry, in the British army the segregation of the two arms in peace and in war led to a certain lack of understanding which at one time was serious.

Parenthetically we may here point out that the segregation of the two principal arms is a most unfortunate military practice. Nor can necessity be pleaded for it. The segregation is being carried farther to-day by the formation of special corps such as machine-gun corps and tank corps, the officers of whom are apparently to remain permanently in those corps. There is no reason that can be adduced why every officer in the first twelve to fifteen years of his service, or indeed in all his service, should not

be freely transferred from arm to arm, and be thoroughly trained in all branches of the service, including air reconnaissance. We said there is no reason, but of course there is a reason. Such transfers would be against tradition and sentiment, and would be unpopular, especially at first. The objections would not of course be put in that blunt way; it would not be said that such an army system would be unpopular, but that it would be impracticable, and that no man could learn the details of all arms and be fully proficient. This is absurd. Quite good officers were trained during the war in six months, and even became good Staff officers without any training.

The Air Service in all armies was weak. The Germans had placed too great a reliance on the airship. The use of the aeroplane in combination with artillery had not been carefully practised by any army, partly of course because the artillery and air service of all armies are segregated into separate arms, and partly because the aeroplane was not very reliable. Separating the army and air into different services is a retrograde and insane measure. Though probably inevitable in the actual conditions of the late war, it should be abandoned with all speed now. The best man to shoot a battery is the commander. If he can do this best from a plane, up he must go.

The Staffs of all armies were well trained, and proved equal to their work. It is a matter of great surprise that the British Staff proved so good considering the very small chance it had had of practising itself except on paper schemes—a poor substitute, because on paper one always assumes average values, average marches, average fighting power. In war averages tend to disappear, troops respond to a call, and march heroic distances, and fight heroic fights, or fail for some unexplained cause and behave like poltroons. Paper schemes are a very moderate training for war.

We may here remark that it is a matter of great surprise that the Staff of the British Army was able to expand itself sufficiently to staff the enormous armies raised as the war

went on, with—comparatively—few failures. This result came about because of the existence of that remarkable institution the “Staff College,” which is really a “War School.” Through this institution had passed a large number of very able men, and thus a body of officers had been trained in one school of thought, who were available to fill the higher Staff posts of the new formations which had to be raised. The value of the existence of this body of men is certainly not fully grasped by the British peoples generally. Very wisely all higher appointments were reserved for Staff College graduates. Almost all others, including regular officers, were excluded. If this wise provision had not been insisted on, heaven alone knows who would have been forced upon the army for the higher Staff appointments ; assuredly political and social influence would have introduced many a politician or “business man” to make the same muddle of military work, that so many did when they tried their ’prentice hands at Civil Service work.

There never was any dislike of this provision in the army ; all recognized its wisdom, though all realized that outside the circle were many men at least as able as some of the insiders.

The animus that arose later in the war against the Staff arose from far other causes, and it was undoubtedly in some measure the fault of the Staff that such feeling did arise. The quite unnecessary smarter uniform and quite unnecessary extra pay were minor causes of irritation. The perfectly childish way in which the Staff loaded one another with decorations was a constant source of irritation. But the assumption that the Staff officer is of more value than the regimental officer was the chief source of irritation, and very justly. One sees this spirit very clearly in Sir John French’s “1914.” He regrets having let a Staff officer return to regimental duty, where he was killed, because a good Staff officer was thereby lost. Are we to infer that it was particularly difficult to get another officer to act as liaison officer with Ist Corps Headquarters ? This is ridicu-

lous. Staff work does not require such quite exceptional qualities as all that. The fact is that the Staff officer's job is generally less important than that of a regimental officer, *of the same grade*, particularly in the junior grades. A few pages later Sir John French states categorically that the battle of Ypres was won because of the splendid fighting of the junior officers and the rank and file, and this is a fact. Naturally this process of putting an undue value on the work (the very simple work for the most part) of the Staff caused irritation. The growing multitude of the hangers-on of the Staff also irritated the regimental people who bore all the discomfort and nineteen-twentieths of the danger. But undoubtedly the principal cause of the dislike of the Staff was that the Staff officer was privileged as a caste apart, something of superior make and breed. He had more leave. He travelled on leave in comfort segregated from his "inferiors" of the fighting arms. That mere boys, because they were A.D.C.s or G.S.O.(3), should go to and from Boulogne or Salonica, or wherever it was, in a car, while poor unfortunate men just out of the firing line had to jolt to the base in lorries and uncomfortable trains, in utter discomfort, was a never-failing source of irritation. It was the privileges, quite unnecessary, that burnt in and annoyed.¹ It is thought advisable to insert this digression in this work, as the value of the existence of the body of trained men, trained in one school, very able, keen, hard-working, has been misunderstood, and stupid, ignorant, criticism has been levelled against the command itself. Few realize how much Britain owes to that body of Staff College graduates.

Such, then, in brief outline is a summary of the strengths of the opposing nations. Germany, ready at every point, superior in strength immediately available, better armed, and prepared to sacrifice all decency and public morals,

¹ Even when it was impossible to get transport for necessities for the regimental folk, there always was plenty for luxuries for the Staff officers and men. Thousands of instances of this can be cited.

was allied to a State unprepared, irresolute, with an effete upper class and a portion of its subjects disloyal.

Russia and France, both inadequately prepared, and suffering from the moral smart of recent defeats, were apparently in every respect unequal to their opponents—at first. If Germany could achieve a rapid victory over France the war would be won, so it would seem.

But Germany in her insane pride—surely the *ὕβρις* of the Greeks in modern guise—provoked to war a State which, if not powerful on land, had yet some power there, and immense resources, and, what Germany failed to reckon on, a fleet sufficient to command the seas, to enforce a strict blockade, and ultimately to bring victory to the Allied cause. Without the British Fleet, even if the Channel and Mediterranean had been held secure, the blockade could not have been maintained, and in that case Germany would probably have ended victorious.

CHAPTER II

THE STRATEGIC CONCENTRATION

THE PLANS OF CAMPAIGN AS ARRANGED BEFORE THE WAR BEGAN

FACING page 32 will be found a sketch showing the concentration of the armies of the Central Powers.

Germany formed eight armies with several subsidiary detachments. (See Appendix III.)

Ist Army—von Kluck, six corps—concentrated with its leading corps at Aix-la-Chapelle. The bulk of the army was north-east of that point behind Dutch-Limburg.

IIInd Army—von Bülow, six corps—concentrated immediately south of Ist Army facing the Belgian frontier.

IIIrd Army—von Hausen, four corps, three of which were Saxon corps—concentrated behind the Ardennes and the northern portion of Luxemburg.

IVth Army—Duke Albrecht of Würtemberg, five corps—concentrated behind Luxemburg.

Vth Army—The Crown Prince, five corps—concentrated south of Luxemburg and east of Thionville (Diedenhofen).

VIth Army—Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, five corps—concentrated in Lorraine, east of Metz.

VIIth Army—von Heeringen, three corps—concentrated in the north of Alsace, west of Strasburg.

A detachment—von Diemling—consisting of Ersatz and Landwehr troops, was placed on the left of the VIIth Army to guard the upper Rhine and the southern portion of Alsace.

IIInd, IVth, and Vth Armies had siege trains attached.

The first five armies all had numerous Landwehr troops

attached, to guard the lines of communication as the army corps advanced. Eight cavalry divisions, three attached to armies, and five formed as Ist and IIInd Cavalry Corps, were with the Army.

Ist Cavalry Corps, under von Richtofen, was between IIInd and IIrd Armies.

IIInd Cavalry Corps, under von Marwitz, in front of Ist Army.

The total (exclusive of Landwehr, siege troops, etc.) amounted to two cavalry and thirty-four army corps.

It will be noticed that facing Liége is marked "von Emmich." This force consisted of the IIInd Cavalry Corps of three divisions and six brigades of infantry, on a reinforced peace footing, hurried out from the frontier corps in advance to seize the fortress of Liége and the crossings of the Meuse River. Germany had guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg, yet from the outset of the war she refused to admit that her word was her bond, and attacked Belgium, who defended herself. On August 4th von Emmich's special force, acting as an advanced guard to von Kluck's and von Bülow's armies, crossed the frontier and marched on Liége.

TOPOGRAPHY OF FRANCO-GERMAN FRONTIER

To account for this action we must examine the topography of the eastern frontier of France.¹ The old frontier between Switzerland on the south and Luxemburg in the north is not very long, not much over 150 miles in an air line. Not only so, but the frontier affords good positions for an army on the defensive. In the south, between the Vosges and the Jura Mountains, there is a gap in the hills some twenty miles wide. Here France has placed the powerful fortress of Belfort. The frontier then runs along the Vosges. The summits were, it is true, in German hands, but forts had been erected by the French to guard the roads and delay an enemy's advance. West of the

¹ See strategical map at end of book.

Vosges the country is difficult for an invader, and there are three good lines of defence—the rivers Meurthe, Mortagne, and Moselle. On the upper Moselle some fifty miles or so from Belfort stands the powerful fortress of Epinal. Altogether this area is a very difficult one for an invader, and was strongly fortified. Moreover, the railways across the Vosges are only two in number and easily destroyed. Some twenty miles or so in an air line, lower down the Moselle from Epinal, stands the fortress of Toul. Between these points is the so-called Trouée, or Gap, of Charmes, sometimes called of Mirécourt, and sometimes the Trouée de la Moselle. This has always been one of the historic routes of entry into France. But it must be admitted that the area, though not fortified in peace, is one readily adaptable to defence, with the deep valleys of the Mortagne and Meurthe through it. From Toul on the Moselle to Verdun on the Meuse is a distance of only some forty to fifty miles, and this area had been strongly fortified. In advance had been placed several small forts now obsolete. This area covers the great route via Verdun and Chalons to Paris. The line of the Meuse was in itself strong, and it was further fortified. North of Verdun there is very little room for an army to deploy without violating Belgian territory, and in any case the south-eastern portion of Belgium includes the difficult Ardennes area. South-east of Verdun there is a difficult bit of marshy woodland known as the Woevre, while west of it lies the difficult wooded wilderness of the Argonnes Hills. East of Toul is the fine old town of Nancy. This is protected from the east by a series of heights which form a semicircle covering the town. This is called the Grand Couronné de Nancy, destined to become of great importance. But no permanent fortifications were constructed to cover Nancy.

To defend this 150 miles or so of frontier the French could place in the line twenty-one corps plus twenty-one reserve divisions which would fill up the frontier with a living wall, and so force upon the Germans a costly frontal

attack, in difficult country. The only way to carry through an envelopment of a French flank was to ignore the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg, and march their right wing through these States. Hence we find that five strong armies totalling twenty-six army corps were massed on the right, while from Metz to Switzerland—almost the whole length of the French frontier—stood only eight corps and some detachments of second-line troops.

To complete our survey of the topography we now note that from Verdun the Meuse flows in a north-westerly direction to Namur. Eastward of this area lies the gorge of the Semoy River, and east of this is the hilly wooded country of the Ardennes, crossed from east to west by only one good railway line, but by several excellent roads. Below Dinant, in Belgium, the Meuse enters a more hospitable but still difficult country. At Namur the river is joined by the Sambre and turns sharply to the north-east, passing Liège and then into the peculiar promontory of Dutch-Limburg. This promontory of neutral territory jutting out south constricts the entry from Germany into Belgium. Belgium had placed powerful fortresses at Namur and Liège. Through Liège up the valleys of the Meuse and the Sambre ran many railway lines.

Germany, then, had evidently decided years before the war began to invade Belgium, and, with that passion for so-called "thoroughness" which characterizes her thought, her soldiers had decided on, and forced her statesmen to accept, an invasion, not only of that portion of Belgium which lies east of the Meuse, but right across the Meuse itself. This is why on August 4th an ultimatum was delivered to Belgium, and on the 5th von Emmich was hammering at the gates of Liège.

CENTRAL POWERS' CONCENTRATION IN EAST

On the eastern front the Central Powers had concentrated as follows :

In East Prussia there was a GERMAN army, the VIIIth—

von Prittwitz—consisting of four corps and a cavalry division. The bulk of this army was concentrated on the Angerapp River, one corps watched the frontier of East Prussia on the south from Lotzen to the fortress of Thorn on the Vistula River. Frontier guards and Landwehr troops watched the Posen frontier.

In Silesia had collected a corps of Landwehr and Ersatz formations under von Woyrsch. This corps was in close touch with the Austrians guarding Cracow and West Galicia under von Kummers.

The remainder of the Austro-Hungarian armies were collected as follows :

Ist Army—Dankl, three corps and two cavalry divisions—was at and north of Jaroslav.

IVth Army—Auffenberg, three corps and two cavalry divisions—was north of Przemysl.

IIIrd Army—Brudermann—three corps and four cavalry divisions—was east of Lemberg and along the Dniester valley.

The line of the frontier southwards to the Bukovina was watched by frontier guards and reserve formations, under von Kovess, commander of IIIrd Corps which belonged to IIIrd Army.

The XIVth Corps was also on this front, but was held in reserve at Stary Sambor.

The marches between the Eastern Powers and Russia are divided into three great areas. On the south the hilly forest country of East Galicia and the Bukovina, intersected by the Dniester River and backed in the west by the Carpathian wall, merging gradually as one proceeds east into the Ukrainian plain.

North of Galicia lies the great plain of Russian Poland, cut in two by the Vistula. This great plain, which is the centre of the Polish State, is by no means densely peopled. Areas are highly cultivated and populous, other areas are desolate, with swamps and patches of forest. In all the plain there are hardly any elevations. There are very few roads. Only those joining comparatively large towns can

really be described as roads. In wet weather the mud of Poland, which is proverbial, is an obstacle to military movements. Strategically, Russian Poland forms a great salient pointing straight at Germany's heart. Russia had fortified the line of the Vistula from Ivangorod to Novo Georgievski. Behind the Vistula flows the Bug, on which stands the unfinished fortress of Brest-Litovski. It had been intended to complete a chain of fortresses on the Niemen and the Bug Rivers.

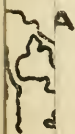
North of the Polish plain is East Prussia, a country of lakes and forests and swift streams. The reason for the concentration of the Central Powers is now clear to see. The concentration was pushed as far up to the base of the great Polish salient as possible, in order to threaten and *attack* the Russian concentration zone behind the Vistula. There can be no doubt that, relying on their own great speed of concentration, and on the slowness of Russian concentration, the Central Powers intended to strike at the Russian forces in the base of the salient as quickly as possible, and thus gain an initial success. Time would then be available to guard Austria's exposed right flank, where the Southern Russian armies would find a vulnerable point.

But Austria also counted on other troops to guard her right. The troops detailed to crush Serbia were sufficiently numerous to carry out this duty expeditiously and then hurry to the support of the right flank in East Galicia. These forces were IInd Army—Boehm-Ermolli, three corps—and Vth Army—Potiorek, three corps. These two armies were assembled on the northern and western frontiers of Serbia. We shall be able to consider this when we consider the Serbian operations.

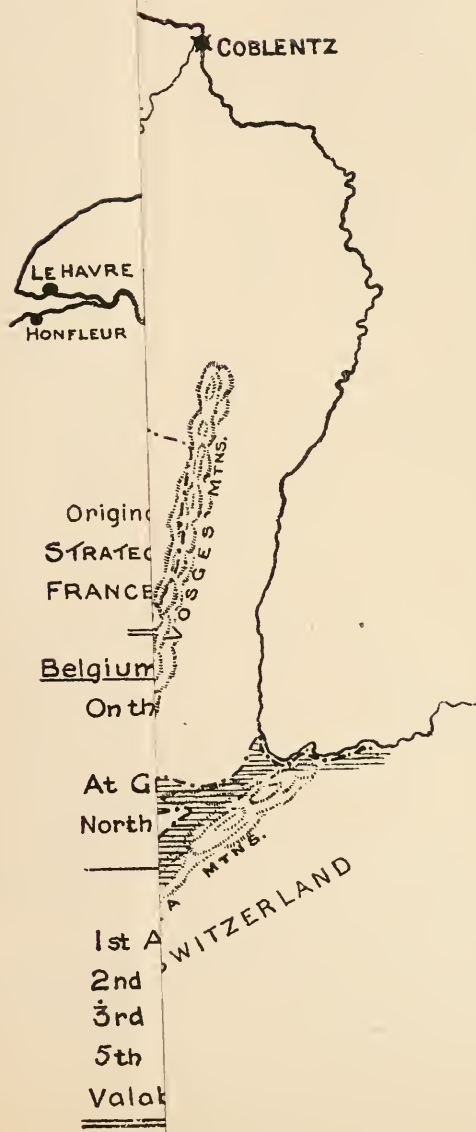
CONCENTRATION OF WESTERN POWERS

BELGIUM concentrated one and a half divisions of the field army on the Meuse, one division at Ghent,¹ one at Namur,

¹ The division which concentrated at Ghent would have been the point of a force meeting a British invasion.









and the rest between Antwerp and Brussels. As soon as Germany violated her territory, the division from Ghent was brought to the main army. It is clear, then, that her strategic deployment towards the east envisaged firstly a defence of the line of the Meuse, and secondly the concentration of a strong General Reserve based on the great fortress of Antwerp. This army would be well placed to strike the flank of any force crossing the Meuse, and would threaten the rear of a German army moving across the Meuse towards France.

FRANCE concentrated as shown in the sketch opposite.

A detachment of three reserve divisions watched Italy.

1st Army—Dubail, five army corps—lay from Belfort to Epinal.

2nd Army—Castelnau, five army corps—was at Toul and Nancy.

3rd Army—Ruffey, three corps—was at Verdun.

5th Army—de Lanrezac, five corps—was on the Meuse from the Argonnes to Mezières.

Three reserve divisions under Valabrègue were placed behind the left at Hirson.

In reserve stood a cavalry corps of three divisions under Sordet and 4th Army—de l'Angle de Cary, three corps—in the area west of Commercy. The remainder of the twenty-one reserve divisions were available as reinforcements when required, or were detailed for garrison work.

The first thing that strikes us in this distribution is the great strength of the wings. It would seem that even before the war a German incursion through Luxemburg was feared, hence the placing of five army corps and three reserve divisions on the left flank. But the great strength, ten corps, of the right wing, while an apparently small General Reserve is in hand, indicates also very clearly that an offensive in Alsace and Lorraine was intended as soon as possible.

There is no clear evidence of any definite objective having been arranged in the Plan of Campaign which must

have been prepared long before the war by the French General Headquarters. It may be that no definite plan existed. The policy was perhaps that of "Wait and See." We shall see that the concentration according to pre-war plan never took place, for the Reserve Army did not complete its concentration west of Commercy.

CONCENTRATION OF RUSSIA

RUSSIA mobilized her forces with greater rapidity than had been expected. It is exceedingly difficult to obtain accurate information as to the strategic concentration of her armies.

Originally five armies were formed :

1st Army—Rennenkampf, four corps (probably 3rd, 4th, 20th, 22nd) with five cavalry divisions, also two rifle brigades—assembled on the Niemen River about Suwalki.

2nd Army—Samssonov, five corps (1st, 13th, 15th, 23rd, and 6th) with their five cavalry divisions—assembled on the Narew River about Lomza.

3rd Army—Russki, probably four army corps (including 7th and 11th) and at least five cavalry divisions—assembled in the area about Kovno and Dubno.

4th Army—Everth, three corps (Grenadiers 16th and 17th)—and 5th Army—Plehve, three corps (including 5th and 9th) — both assembled in the area about Lublin and Cholm between the Vistula and the Bug.

A force appeared in the south under Brussilov, and from an early date the 8th Army under Ivanov was collecting at Proskurov ; this included two army corps.

Thus the initial Russian distribution was in two main groups. The northern group of nine or ten army corps opposed the Germans in East Prussia, connected by the fortified line of the Vistula to the southern group of twelve corps (about), which was itself disposed in two groups, one of six corps between the Vistula and the Bug facing Przemysl in West Galicia, and one of six corps facing Lemberg

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Original STRATEGIC Concentration
RUSSIA.

in East Galicia. The Lomza-Warsaw-Ivangorod railway joined the two wings.

The frontier of Poland was only watched, but the frontier of Galicia in the south was faced by fairly large forces which seem at that period to have been commanded by Brussilov, and to have consisted chiefly of Cossacks.

There would seem to be no doubt that Russia was also determined on an early offensive. Connecting her two groups with the fortified line of the Vistula behind which reinforcements were pouring in, her two wings were to advance. The right in overwhelming strength would force back and perhaps destroy the German Army in East Prussia. The left group would meet the Austrian attack between the Vistula and the Bug with the 4th and 5th Armies, while the 3rd Army reinforced by the 8th, and other troops concentrating south of the Pripet marshes in the direction of Kiev, would come up and counter-attack any Austrian forces advancing between the Vistula and the Bug by a vigorous blow at Lemberg. The two wings could mutually support one another by means of the comparatively well-developed railway system east of the Vistula.

CHAPTER III

AUSTRIA AND SERBIA

ON July 27th Austria declared war on Serbia, and on July 28th Austrian guns from Semlin and from monitors on the Danube bombarded Belgrade.

As will be seen on the map facing page 38, the frontiers of Serbia are, on the north the Save and Danube, on the east the Drina River. Serbia, then, was a promontory or salient jutting into Austrian territory. Belgrade is at the junction of the Save and Danube. The whole country is mountainous except a few narrow valleys, one being the valley of the Danube. A range of hills bounds the Danube valley on the south broken by the narrow valleys of the Morava and Kolubara Rivers, the former of which pierces the chain from the south and forms the main line of approach to the heart of the country. A tributary of the Morava, called the Serbian Morava, forms a line of approach from the west once the head waters of the stream are reached from Ushitze.

The Austrians concentrated six army corps, not complete in every detail, but supported by units of other corps.

IInd Army, VIIIth, IVth, VIIth Corps, concentrated along the north front from Janja to Semlin (opposite Belgrade).

Vth Army concentrated two corps, XIIIth and XVth, on the Drina from Zvornik to Focha. The XVIth Corps was half in reserve at Sarajevo, half watching Montenegro.

The Serbians formed themselves into four army corps of various strengths.

1st Corps under Peter Boyovitch, consisting of three

divisions collected on the Racha Palanka to protect the Morava valley.

2nd Corps, under Stephen Stephanovitch, consisting of four divisions, was held on the hills south of Belgrade.

3rd Corps, under Youritsch Sturi, consisted of only two divisions, and was at Valjevo in the valley of the Kolubara.

4th Corps of two divisions was at Ushitze, at the head of the Serbian Morava.

A small detachment with the cavalry division was at Obranovitza, at the junction of the Kolubara and the Save, watching the angle of the frontier.

On August 12th the Vth Austrian Army forced the passage of the Drina in six columns, the main force marching up the valley of the Yadar River. Shabatz was occupied by the IVth Corps.

Putnik, the veteran leader of the Serbs, was in no way surprised. Gradually, contesting every foot of the way, the Serb advanced troops fell back. There was confused fighting all along the line as the Austrians advanced into the mountainous country.

The valley of the Yadar is separated from that in which lies Shabatz by the Tser Planina, a rugged range of rocky hills. Here the 2nd Corps on August 17th, 18th, and 19th gripped, drove back, and finally utterly routed the enemy. His line was broken; panic seized the Austro-Hungarian forces, the rout was complete. Belgrade was abandoned, and the Austrian forces fled for safety to the farther banks of the frontier rivers. The Serbs did not pursue across the rivers.

This victory was greatly facilitated by the withdrawal of part and finally all the IInd Austrian Army to Galicia, in consequence of the Austrian danger there. Thus Russia gave help in the nick of time to one ally. We shall see how she helped the Western front also.

Strategically the Austrian operations were quite futile. The intention was to break the left wing of the Serbian armies and establish the Austrian armies on the Kolubara

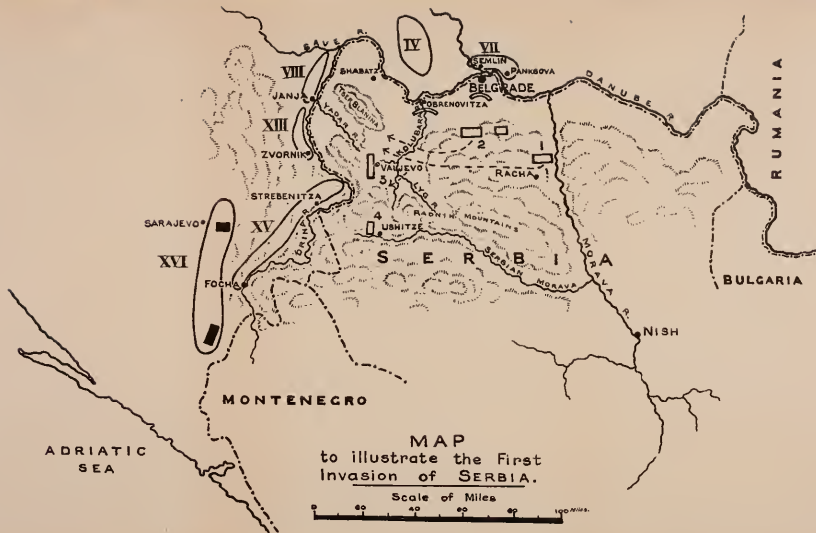
and upper waters of the Serbian Morava; at any rate one must assume that to have been the objective. To do this it was essential to hold the Serb forces south of Belgrade and in the Morava valley from moving to the aid of their left wing. Now the Serbs possessed a railway and good roads from the Morava valley at Racha to the Kolubara River, well protected by the Kosmai hills south of Belgrade. There is also a fine road up the Kolubara valley and over the mountains to Ushitze. There are good roads and a railway up the Serbian Morava, so concentration westwards was easy.

Possibly, in fact probably, the Austrians had no formed plan. They concentrated their corps as quickly as they could, and then just marched into the enemy country in the way which gave the least trouble to arrange. They may have thought that the terror of their name was enough, that the Serbs would not dare to resist. If so they were mistaken.

The Austrian and Hungarian troops, and particularly the latter, committed the grave military blunder of behaving with appalling barbarity to the unfortunate civilians, the women, and the children. Such acts only serve to nerve the heart and strengthen the arm of the enemy. They do not strike terror into the hostile army. They also relax the bonds of discipline and in the long run are fatal to the *moral* of an army.

The Serbian plan, on the other hand, is a perfect illustration of the use of interior lines by an inferior force acting on the defensive. Putnik did not move till he saw his adversary's cards on the table. Then he moved and struck at the weakest point in his enemy's line. He struck with all his strength. Even so he would not have won so easily but for the superior fighting qualities of his troops.





CHAPTER IV

THE STRATEGIC DEPLOYMENT IN THE WEST

THE OPENING MOVES—THE BATTLE OF THE FRONTIERS

(See Map at end of chapter and Strategic Map at end of Volume)

AS we have seen, the zones of concentration of both the German and the French armies were arranged in such a manner as to facilitate deployment for attack. Both adversaries were determined to attack from the earliest date possible, and both seemed to intend to lead off with their right wings while gripping the enemy with their left and centre.

THE STRATEGIC DEPLOYMENT OF GERMANY

The line of strategic deployment selected by the German General Staff was a more or less straight line from Liège on the right to Thionville on the left. The VIth and VIIth Armies were to guard the left flank. To gain this line of deployment it was necessary to fight, because Belgium refused to be frightened into a submissive acceptance of a violation of her territory. There seems to be no doubt that this was the first of the series of blunders made by the German General Staff, which, in order to gain a militarily better position, sacrificed all decency and public morals. We shall see that the "Belgian ulcer"—to paraphrase the old saying of Napoleon about his difficulties in Spain—probably cost Germany the loss of her first battles. It definitely ranged an enthusiastic British Empire against her, and

alienated the sympathy of the whole civilized world, with the exception of the relatively insignificant numbers of the aristocracies of those countries whose rulers are or were Germans, such as Holland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Greece, and Luxemburg. Even in these countries the bulk of public opinion and feeling was turned against Germany by this vile deed.

On August 4th, 1914, at 9 a.m., German troops crossed the Belgian frontier on the "frisch und fröhlich" (cheery and jolly) campaign which was to ruin Germany utterly. The force which had to clear the way to the line of strategic deployment of the Ist and IInd Armies was composed of the IInd Cavalry Corps (three divisions) and six infantry brigades taken from the frontier corps and hastily brought up to war strength. The force was commanded by General von Emmich. On the same day, without declaration of war, German patrols entered French territory and committed brutalities. On August 3rd a German aeroplane dropped bombs on the open town of Lunéville, thus inaugurating this German method of trying to terrify the civilian population. The Germans used to accuse their enemies of doing this sort of thing, without the slightest foundation in fact. The mentality which allows of such stupid falsehoods is not comprehensible to us. Possibly it is to the Germans. The German attack on civilians only nerved the arm of their enemies' soldiers and steeled the determination of the enemy population. It was thoroughly bad military policy. As a method of war it is comparable with that of those savages and ancient Chinese who try to horrify their enemies by diabolic costumes and horrifying sounds.

Two cavalry divisions advanced on the Meuse north of Liège, and one southwards towards Namur, while the infantry brigades marched straight on the fortress. The cavalry forded the Meuse at Lixhe, but were held up by the Belgian cavalry. The infantry attacked some of the forts on the 5th, but were repulsed with heavy loss except

at one point. By a night attack with the bayonet the Belgians cleared this party out. During the night 5th-6th, some of the German 14th Brigade got in between two of the forts in the southern sector. On the 6th a general attack on the line of forts was delivered, but repulsed with heavy loss, but the 14th German Infantry Brigade, which had got through during the night, pushed on. The brigadier was killed, but General-Major Ludendorf, who was on von Emmich's staff, took command of the brigade. According to German accounts the white flag appeared on the citadel in the evening, but an officer sent to negotiate was told that it had been put up without permission from the commander, General Leman. On the night of August 6th-7th Leman withdrew the field troops (3rd Division and part of 4th). On the 7th the town itself was occupied, but some of the forts held out under severe bombardment for several days more. The Belgian Army had taken position behind the Gette River with the cavalry on the left towards Hasselt.

The German losses in front of Liège were certainly heavy. Partly doubtless in revenge, the atrocities, which commenced at this time, were inaugurated. It is indeed a pity that the evidence of these atrocities is not more widely known among all peoples, and particularly among the Germans, many of whom, especially in Western Germany, would feel the shame of it.

The resistance of Liège had not appreciably delayed the German movement from the zone of concentration to that of deployment. South of the cavalry of the IInd Cavalry Corps, Belgium and Luxemburg were invaded by the Ist Cavalry Corps, and the army cavalry of the IIIrd and IVth Armies, who formed a screen from east of Arlon in the south to east of Namur in the north. Huy was soon occupied by units of the IInd Army. The right of the Vth Army pushed into Luxemburg and besieged Longwy. By August 17th the German troops had reached their appointed line, from Liège to Thionville. On this day von Bülow was placed in command of the right wing—Ist and IInd Armies—

and on August 18th the swing of the right commenced pivoting on the left of IInd Army, which advanced gradually up the Meuse towards Namur. At the same time IIIrd Army advanced slightly with its right towards Namur. IIIrd and IVth Armies entrenched their positions as they advanced. The Ist Cavalry Corps covered the front of IInd and IIIrd Armies and felt the line of the Meuse near Dinant. It will be advisable to continue to record the movements of Ist Army for the next day or two in order to get a clear picture.

THE GERMAN ADVANCE COMMENCES

There had been one or two sharp cavalry actions with the Belgians in which the Germans were unsuccessful. Attacking cavalry were not often successful during the war.

It will be noticed that in the country between Liège on the Meuse and Brussels on the Senne are two little rivers, the Gette and the Dyle, the latter famous in the campaign of 1815 when Grouchy marched down its right bank to attack the Prussians at Wavre, while Napoleon's guns were thundering at Waterloo.

The Belgians had taken post with four divisions on the Gette, and they were joined later by part of the 4th Division from Namur. On August 18th the advancing German columns struck the line of the Gette. The Belgians put up a stout fight against overwhelming numbers. In the night they broke off the action and fell back to the Dyle. On August 19th Aerschot was lost after a sharp fight. After the action the Germans committed the most horrible atrocities there. The line of the Dyle evidently could not be held, so on the 20th the Belgians fell back to Antwerp. The Germans occupied Brussels on the same day. These actions, which forced the German columns to deploy for attack and to sustain serious losses in hard fighting, considerably delayed the rapidity of movement of von Kluck. As we shall see, if he had been two days, or

even one, in advance of his time at Mons, there would have been a different story to tell. Thus the delay caused by Belgian resistance hindered the Germans as well as inflicting losses, but there was more to come.

When the Belgians had to retire into Antwerp Kluck could only go on provided his rear was safe. To guard this he had to detach IIIrd Reserve Corps and all his Landwehr. A brigade (one quarter) of IVth Reserve Corps had to be left at Brussels. Lastly, IXth Reserve Corps, which came up soon from Schleswig, was also left in Belgium instead of marching to join the main army. Thus the Belgian detachment of the allied armies—if we so regard it, for it was so strategically—"contained" two corps, and there was yet more to come. On August 20th von Bülow's left and von Hausen's right reached Namur. To besiege it XIth Corps and Guard Reserve Corps were detached, the former from IIIrd Army, the latter from IInd Army. Namur did not offer a very determined resistance, for it was in German hands in four or five days, but XIth and Guard Reserve were not in line on August 23rd, so the resistance of the Belgians caused a loss to the German marching wing of four corps if only for a short time. As a matter of fact XIth and Guard Reserve Corps never rejoined the main army, for immediately after the fall of Namur they were entrained and hurried to East Prussia on account of happenings there which we shall examine in another chapter. At Namur Bülow's left had to mark time while the right swung up. We will leave the Germans at this point to examine the French movements.

PRELIMINARY FRENCH OPERATIONS

On August 2nd, as soon as news of the contemplated German invasion of Belgium was received, a change in the strategic concentration was ordered. 5th Army (de Lanrezac) was ordered to close to its left with its right about Mezières, and 4th Army was ordered to come into the

gap thus made between 3rd and 5th Armies. At the same time 5th Army had to give up a corps to 4th Army. But 2nd Army was ordered to send a corps (18th) to the left of 5th Army. 5th Army when it moved to the left also left a corps with 3rd Army. Very soon this corps was transferred to 4th Army. These changes altered the army strengths in Active Corps to

1st Army . . .	5 corps
2nd Army . . .	4 „
3rd Army . . .	3 „
4th Army . . .	5 „
5th Army . . .	4 „

making up the twenty-one corps including colonial corps, but not including 19th Corps, which was not used as a corps, but in independent divisions as they arrived from Africa.

On August 5th the 1st Cavalry Corps under Sordet was ordered to reconnoitre towards Neufchateau in Belgian Luxemburg. At the same time 5th Army's cavalry division (4th Division) and 4th Army's cavalry division (9th Division) were grouped under General Abonneau and ordered to reconnoitre towards Arlon and Virton. One cannot but be surprised at the direction given to Sordet's corps, in view of events in Belgium.

FIRST INVASION OF ALSACE

7th Corps belonging to 1st Army was stationed at Belfort. As there were reported to be only weak forces in Alsace, this corps was ordered to advance into southern Alsace, towards Mulhausen. The value of this operation is in any case doubtful. Possibly the idea was to draw off troops from farther north, threaten and disturb the German concentration, and gain a local success which might be expected to raise the *moral* of the country generally. If so it was a dismal failure. The corps moved on the 5th, reached Altkirch on the 7th, and Mulhausen on the 9th

with one brigade. This brigade was struck on the night 9th-10th by a double attack issuing from the forests. The whole corps fell back in much disorder and did not stop till it was under the shelter of the forts of the Belfort fortress area.

General Joffre, the Commander-in-Chief of the French armies, did not care to rest under this affront to French arms. The general commanding 7th Corps, who had not kept a good control of his columns, was replaced by General Pau. An Army of Alsace was formed, consisting of 7th Corps and 44th Infantry Division, four reserve divisions, and some battalions of Chasseurs Alpins.

The whole of the right wing, 2nd, 1st, and Army of Alsace, was now ordered to move forward with the right leading. About August 15th 2nd Army was warned to have 9th Corps in readiness to move north, following the 18th Corps which was already on its way.

SECOND INVASION OF ALSACE

About August 10th the covering forces of both 2nd and 1st Armies were on the move forward. By August 14th Mount Donon was occupied by 21st Corps, 1st Army. 14th Corps captured other passes in the Vosges on that day, and St. Marie aux Mines on the 16th. The Germans lost heavily both in prisoners and guns. 2nd Army pushed forward across the Seille River. The Army of Alsace moving on August 15th reached Mulhausen again on the 19th. August 19th saw 1st and 2nd Armies in touch with strong enemy positions at Sarrburg and Morhange. The German VIth and VIIth Armies and von Diemling's detachment had steadily fallen back. We must note that in this quarter, at this date, the French were superior in numbers to the Germans. 2nd Army now disposed of at least five reserve divisions, so the total force of the three right armies amounted to eight and a half active corps,¹ two

¹ Including half the 9th Corps.

mixed colonial brigades, four cavalry divisions, ten or twelve reserve divisions, and some ten battalions of Chasseurs Alpins. Opposed to these were only eight German corps and a few, probably six, brigades of Ersatz and Landwehr troops, and apparently two cavalry divisions. The French on this wing were much superior.

SORDET'S CAVALRY CORPS

Leaving 1st and 2nd Armies facing the German positions, we will return north to follow the fortunes of the 1st French Cavalry Corps. As we saw on August 5th, it was ordered to reconnoitre on the front of the 4th and 5th Armies in Belgian Luxemburg. The corps soon found hostile troops well organized in a defensive line east of Neufchateau and along the line of the Ourthe River. On August 8th the corps pushed north between the Ourthe and the Meuse; some of the patrols got as far north as eight miles from Liège. On August 9th the whole corps returned to the point from which it had started towards Liège. On August 11th and 12th the whole corps was again reconnoitring in the Neufchateau direction. On the 15th the corps recrossed the Meuse above Dinant. At this moment the German 1st Cavalry Corps was making an attempt on Dinant, but Sordet's Corps did not intervene. Had they done so Richtofen might have suffered a serious defeat, instead of being merely repulsed. At this juncture the 1st Cavalry Corps was temporarily attached to 5th Army and ordered to watch the passages of the Sambre from Namur to Charleroi. The corps crossed the river and established itself towards Ligny. On August 17th the cavalry made arrangements for a joint movement with some Belgian troops from Namur and a brigade of 4th Belgian Division. But on the 18th, as we have seen, the Belgians were attacked on the Gette, so the plan failed. However, Sordet pushed towards Perwez. On August 19th the cavalry was in contact with German infantry in the direction of Perwez

and suffered severely. The corps fell back to Charleroi and the passages of the Sambre. It had accomplished less than nothing, for it had discovered no facts of serious importance; the prisoners taken had given but little information except to confirm the presence of large forces in Belgium; and on the other hand the corps had lost an enormous number of horses, certainly over 3,000, perhaps 10,000. It is true that the French are, to British ideas, very bad horse-masters, but the latter figure is incredible.

THE FRENCH PLAN OF ATTACK

(See also Appendix IVA)

We have now arrived at the date on which the great French offensive was to be launched. We have followed briefly the main movements up to August 19th, without entering into details of the gradual move to the left of 5th, 4th, and 3rd Armies. On this day the French situation was briefly as follows:

The Army of Alsace and the right of the 1st Army were in occupation of the Upper Ill and the Vosges crests as far north as Mt. Donon. The rest of 1st Army and the mass of the 2nd Army were facing strong German positions from Saarburg to north-west of Morhange. At Nancy in reserve to the 2nd Army was part 9th Corps and several reserve divisions. Connexion between 1st and 2nd Armies was maintained by a newly formed 2nd Cavalry Corps under General Conneau. The left flank guard of 2nd Army, 68th Reserve Division, was north-west of Château Salins, and apparently 10th Cavalry Division was on this flank.

To watch Metz and guard against an attack on either 2nd Army's exposed left flank or 3rd Army's right, a special "Army of Lorraine" had been formed under General Manoury. It consisted of six or seven reserve divisions. 3rd Army had advanced and lay from east of Spincourt to south-west of Virton in close touch with 4th Army from

west of Virton to north-west of Paliseul. 3rd Army still consisted of three active corps and a cavalry division. 4th Army consisted of six corps¹ and one or two reserve divisions. 4th Army had placed 52nd Reserve Division to guard its left along the Meuse from Fumay to Mont-hermé. Abonneau's two cavalry divisions covered the front towards Neufchateau.

5th Army had moved still farther to its left and now faced north-east. On its right flank lay 1st Corps with a reserve division, from Givet to north of Dinant guarding the Meuse. 10th and 3rd Corps were at Fosse and Charleroi. 18th Corps was detraining at Thuin. Valabrègue's reserve divisions were near Maubeuge. Sordet's cavalry corps guarded the Sambre passages. The strength of 5th Army amounted to four army corps, a colonial brigade, and four reserve divisions.²

The British army, two corps and a very strong cavalry division, was concentrating behind Maubeuge on the left.

Widely extended at Valenciennes, Cambrai, Condé, Douai, and Lille lay three Territorial divisions hastily organized, ill armed, ill provided with artillery, and without cavalry. General d'Amade was in command in this area with headquarters at Arras.

THE FRENCH PLAN

The presence of at least seven German corps in Belgium plus three in Belgian Luxemburg and six between Luxemburg and Metz was known to French Headquarters. The fact also was clear that the left and centre of the German army were awaiting the swing up of the northern wing. It is not easy to say what exactly was the plan of attack of the French General Headquarters. It seems to have

¹ Including a reconstituted 9th Corps made up of old 9th Corps H.Q., one division old 9th Corps, and Humbert's Colonial Division.

² 4th and 5th Armies each had a cavalry division which were still grouped under Abonneau. This group broke up when the Battle of the Frontiers took place, a division going to each army.

been, first to tie up the German left, and if possible defeat it, and then to attack the German centre as it advanced in order to push it away from the Meuse and thus expose the left wing of those Germans, which had crossed the Meuse, to envelopment from their left (east). The whole scheme depended on the success of the centre group (3rd and 4th Armies), consisting of nine active corps with some reserve divisions. The orders given to the 4th Army were to take in flank and surprise the Germans marching through Belgian Luxemburg by a swift and violent offensive in the direction of Neufchateau. The 3rd Army was to support the 4th by attacking towards Arlon. Army of Lorraine was to protect the flank by pushing the enemy back behind the protection of the works of Metz. 5th Army, moving (apparently) east of the Meuse, was to attack north-east. The British Army was to advance towards Soignies.

Such were the French Headquarters plans for the great offensive.

It will be noticed that the 3rd and 4th Armies, which were facing almost east, were to turn half left to attack north-east. This obviously involved very difficult Staff work. However punctual and accurate in movements the units might be, fatiguing operations were before them. If the Staff work was inaccurate in any particular, or any units failed to keep accurate time, there would certainly be failure. The plan missed one of the most vital military axioms: it was not simple.

THE GERMAN MOVEMENTS

On August 20th the German line ran in almost a straight line, Brussels-Namur-Neufchateau-Longwy-Metz. Longwy was invested and holding out. On the 22nd the advance was resumed all along the line. The right wing had marched hard all the 21st.

The result of the operations of either side was of course an encounter battle, in which the French columns in the

centre marching north-east were struck on the right flank by German columns marching almost due west, while the left of the whole French line was enveloped on its left flank and turned by the march southwards of the 1st Army.

THE BATTLE OF THE FRONTIERS—SAARBURG AND MORHANGE

On August 19th and 20th the 1st and 2nd Armies attacked at Saarburg and Morhange. The Germans counter-attacked. But for the steadiness of Foch's 20th Corps, which was on the left, there might have been a disaster. 15th and 16th Corps fell back almost a rout. Castelnau called on the reserve divisions and part of 9th Corps to organize a line on the Grand Couronné de Nancy, and to that line he fell back. 1st Army was repulsed on the 19th, and then received orders to discontinue its attacks and fell back in conformity with 2nd. "Army of Alsace" also fell back and was soon after dissolved. All its reserve divisions, except one, were taken for the north.

BATTLE OF THE ARDENNES

3rd and 4th Armies moved into position of attack on the 20th and 21st. 4th Army seems to have issued a long series of orders, counter-orders, and amended orders. Its troops were made to march at night. The Germans were, as we have seen, all on the move forward on the 22nd, so there was an encounter battle in which the French columns were taken in flank. Where they made progress they arrived in front of prepared positions. Both French armies had to retire. One or two of their corps became very badly disorganized. On the right Sarraill's 6th Corps did remarkably fine work.

In the centre the French and Germans were not unequal. Army of Lorraine, 3rd, and 4th Army comprised nine active corps, two mixed brigades, and eight or nine reserve divisions. The Vth, IVth, and IIIrd German Armies

amounted to twelve corps, but Vth Army now had a composite corps called "Corps Oven" and several Landwehr formations. The total forces, then, remembering that a French corps was slightly stronger than a German corps, were about equal in numbers.

THE BATTLE OF CHARLEROI

On the left, the 5th Army, now consisting of four active corps, five reserve divisions, and a Moroccan division, could not be ready for attack on the 21st. It had to make a difficult turn full left to attack towards Namur. 1st Corps on the right was relieved by a reserve division and brought farther west. The left of the army was to be covered by reserve divisions in relief of Sordet's Cavalry Corps, very exhausted by its rapid and useless marches in Belgium. De Lanrezac had, it would seem, judged the situation far more clearly than French General Headquarters. He obviously did not like his job at all, but as a good soldier had to obey. Having got his corps in attack positions, he ordered them to entrench and await orders, for clearly until the 4th Army had made good the Semoy, he could not venture to push forward, because his right would be exposed. Nor could he risk a movement until the British were ready to cover his left. He had been promised the support of the British, but their movements were slow. They declined to move till quite ready, and doubtless for good reason refused the assistance of their cavalry. Unfortunately on the 22nd two of his corps attacked without orders, and got badly beaten. This lack of discipline nearly led to utter disaster.

On August 23rd the German IInd and IIIrd Armies attacked. Dinant and Charleroi were lost, with all the passages of the Meuse and Sambre. A retreat was ordered by French Headquarters, which de Lanrezac was not slow to carry out. In the night 23rd-24th the army fell back with its left towards Maubeuge, leaving the British isolated

at Mons. The loss of Dinant had placed the right of 5th Army in a most dangerous position.

BATTLE OF MONS

The British came up into line on the 22nd and 23rd, and preparatory to their attack in conjunction with Vth Army, they carefully prepared their position at Mons. On the 23rd the right was brought back, when 5th French Army fell back. In the evening messages from French Headquarters informed Sir John French of his peril. His troops had beaten off all enemy attacks during the day without difficulty, so he sent up his aeroplanes to reconnoitre. When they confirmed the French reports he gave orders to fall back at dawn next day, 2nd Corps to go back first, and prepare a position, then 1st Corps to fall back, first clearing its front by a counter-attack. The movement was carried out to perfection, but as 5th French Army had gone back on the night 23rd-24th the right of the British was exposed as well as the left. And so the great retreat commenced.

We may well ask ourselves for some explanation of the French defeat. Even without counting the British contingent, a mere two corps and a cavalry division, the French Army was not weaker than the German. In cavalry the numbers were about equal. The Germans put twenty-two active corps into the field, the French twenty-one corps, plus the units of the 19th Corps. In addition the French had the Colonial brigades and some colonial divisions. A French corps was stronger in infantry than a German by on the average one-fifth. In numbers of reserve units there was not much difference. The Germans had twelve reserve corps present, the French twenty reserve divisions. In one thing only were the Germans superior, artillery and machine-gun equipment. The reasons which led to the German success, then, cannot be laid to superiority of numbers on the theatre of operations. The fact is that the French

strategy was radically unsound, the German strategy was sound if not brilliant. The Germans selected a decisive point, in this case the unguarded French left, and at that point they concentrated very superior numbers. But for the opportune arrival of the British, who in their first fight proved themselves the best-trained troops in the field, there is no doubt that utter destruction awaited the French.

The writer cannot refrain from a personal reminiscence. In 1905 he spent three months in Berlin with a German family in order to learn German. One evening his German friends had a party, and, as so constantly happened in Germany, the talk turned on the inevitable war with France and Russia. The evident conviction of everyone present—about a dozen ladies and gentlemen—was that Germany would develop very superior numbers against France. The writer asked how these numbers could break quickly over the French frontier. One and all stated their belief that German armies would march through Belgium. The writer remarked that the British would in that case stand by France. Someone asked how many men the British could put in the field, and the writer answered, "In such short time barely 80,000." At this there was a great laugh in which the women joined as readily as the men. The writer turned to one of the men and said, "Have you any conception of the training of British troops, especially in the use of their rifles?" His only reply was, "Losses will not matter, we shall have plenty of reserves." Yet it was the arrival of the British which just saved the situation on August 23rd and 24th, and it was British musketry which proved the tactical salvation of the Allies on that day. That and the delay to von Kluck caused by the Belgians on the Gette, which allowed 40,000 British rifles to come into line in time.

But the superiority of the Germans was, as the German soldier had said in 1905, too great, not, it is true, on the whole front, but at the decisive point. The little British force could not stem the torrent. We are justified, then, in

stating that the first cause of the French failure was the superiority of the German strategy. Even had the right and centre scored victories instead of failures, the result must have been the same—a French defeat.

But inferior strategy does not altogether account for the French tactical defeats all along the line from Morhange to Charleroi. It seems that several causes operated to account for these. Firstly, moral causes; the supposed superiority in numbers and training of the Prussians weighed heavily in the French mind. Secondly, the superior artillery of the Germans had a very great effect. Several corps broke undoubtedly because of the effect of the German 150-mm. howitzers ("the Crump"). Thirdly, plain bad leading and bad peace training accounted for a great deal. Bad leadership certainly characterized the work of several corps and divisions, and very many smaller units. Artillery and infantry did not always establish a good liaison. Troops were badly trained to use ground, to make defensive works, to scout, to handle their arms. The leadership was not so determined as the Germans. Undoubtedly at this period the German leadership and the initiative of all ranks was at a very high standard, *due to careful peace training*, for it is not innate in the German, as in the French and British character.

Bad strategy and bad tactics as well are sufficient to account for the defeat of any numbers. The strong man who wishes to keep his house in peace must not only be armed, but he must have the latest pattern of arms, and he must know how to use them.

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CHAPTER V

THE FRENCH RETREAT TO THE SEINE

Battles of the Gap of Charmes, Le Cateau, Signy l'Abbaye, St. Quentin-Guise, Rethel—The German pursuit of the Allied armies.

(See Map, page 66, and Strategic Map at end of Volume)

August 24th. Retreat on the left—Battle of Gap of Charmes on the right.—On August 24th the general situation of the armies was as follows:

On the left d'Amade's Territorials and two reserve divisions were retreating amid scenes of extraordinary disorder and panic. Tournai had been lost and its garrison captured.

Under orders from the Ministry of War Lille had been abandoned.¹

The British had fallen back after sharp fighting to the line Maubeuge-Bavai-Jenlain (east of Valenciennes).

5th Army had fallen back rapidly throughout the night 23rd–24th and on the 24th. Its right was now north-west of Givet, and its left already south-east of Maubeuge.

Sordet's Cavalry Corps was at or about Avesnes. Sir John French had called on it for aid on the left and had been promised that assistance for August 26th, but not earlier.

¹ On August 23rd there was a garrison of nearly 20,000 men and 500 guns with adequate ammunition at Lille. D'Amade had ordered preparations for defence to be made, and the generals on the spot were carrying out his orders. The pusillanimous burghers of Lille, headed by their mayor and the prefect of the district, went behind the backs of the soldiers and induced M. Messimy, the Minister for War, to declare Lille an "open town" and to order the evacuation of the place. This was done without reference to Joffre, the Commander-in-Chief. To such base cowardice and selfishness does the ignoble pursuit of commerce bring men.

4th Army had its left watching the Meuse from Fumay to Mezières. Its line there ran along the Meuse and then behind the Chiers River to east of Montmedy. On the whole the corps had gained their new positions steadily. There had been a sharp rearguard action at Carignan. There were some regrettable incidents, such as a panic in one division, soon remedied, and the abandonment without orders of the fort of Les Ayvelles near Sedan.

3rd Army had its left in close touch with the right of 4th Army east of Montmedy, and its right in close touch with the Army of Lorraine west of Spincourt. The Army of Lorraine ran thence to the south, holding the Woevre and connecting with the 2nd Army near Pont-à-Mousson. There was not much fighting in the centre, though one division of 4th Corps retired a little prematurely, thereby jeopardizing the position of its neighbour division, but no serious trouble arose. The right of 3rd Army, however, and the left of Army of Lorraine had severe fighting with the left of German Vth Army.

2nd Army, which had its left flank at Pont-à-Mousson, its centre on the Grand Couronné, and its right behind the Mortagne River, was connected to 1st Army by 2nd Cavalry Corps, which stood about Gerbeviller. 15th and 16th Corps had recovered their *moral*. The Germans, without attacking Nancy, pressed on against the Gap of Charmes, bringing heavy pressure on 15th and 16th Corps, the cavalry, and the left (18th Corps) of 1st Army. To relieve this pressure Foch's 20th Corps and two reserve divisions counter-attacked the German right with success. This relieved the pressure on the rest of the line. The right of 1st Army and the Alsace group were not able to maintain their ground intact.

Such was the position which faced General Joffre on the 25th when the reports of the 24th had all come in. Further, the left two armies were continuing their retreat, for the British were already nearly surrounded. Namur had fallen.

Ist and IIInd German Armies were now known to have consisted of twelve corps. A IIIrd Army at least three corps strong had reached the Meuse between Givet and Namur. Allowing for two corps to guard against the Belgians, there were yet thirteen corps available, presumably, against 5th Army's five and British two and d'Amade's equivalent of one, that is a total of eight at most. The danger to 5th Army's right flank was very serious.

On August 25th therefore French Headquarters issued the following :

" It having been impossible to carry out the projected offensive manœuvre, further operations will be so arranged as to reconstitute on our left a mass capable of manœuvre by the junction of 4th and 5th and British Armies, and of new forces to be concentrated in the east. The other armies will 'contain' for the necessary time the efforts of the enemy.

" During its retreat each army will be careful to consider the movements of its neighbours, with which it must remain in touch. The movement will be covered by rearguards on suitable features of the ground in such a way as to utilize all obstacles to stop, or at any rate check, the enemy advance by short sharp counter-attacks in which artillery must play the principle rôle.

" Zones of action are assigned.

" 1. British Army north-west of the line Le Câteau-Vermand-Nesle.

" 2. 4th and 5th Armies west of this line (exclusive) to the line Stenay, Grandpré, Suippes, Condé-sur-Marne (inclusive).

" 3. 3rd Army (including Army of Lorraine) between the line Sassey, Fleville, Ville-sur-Tourbe, Vitry le Français on the west and Vigneulles, Void, Gondrécourt, on the east.

" 4. On the extreme left between Picquigny and the sea a barrage will be formed on the Somme by the Territorial division of the north and the 61st and 62nd Reserve Divisions.

" 5. The cavalry corps to be on the Authie River ready to follow the movement in advance of the extreme left.

" 6. In front of Amiens . . . a new group formed of troops brought by railway (7th Corps, four reserve divisions, and perhaps another active corps) will be collected between August 27th and September 2nd.

" This group will be ready to take the offensive in the general direction Saint Pol-Arras, or Arras-Bapaume.

" 7. The British Army behind the Somme is to be ready to move either northwards towards Bertincourt or eastwards on Le Catelet.

" 8. The 5th Army will have the bulk of its forces in the area Vermand, Saint Quentin, Moy (offensive front) to debouch in the general direction of Bohain. Its right will hold the line La Fère-Laon-Craonne or Saint Erme.

" 9. 4th Army behind the Aisne on the front Guignicourt, Vouziers, or, if that is not possible, on the front Berry au Bac, Reims, Montagne de Reims, will keep the bulk of its forces ready for offensive action northwards.

" 10. 3rd Army to rest its right on Verdun, its left on the defile of Grand Pré, or on the line Varennes-Ste Menehould. Positions to be organized with extreme care. We shall attack from these positions.

" 11. Orders to 1st and 2nd Armies."

The gist of these instructions are given at length because they appear to be full of significance. One does not, or ought not to, have to tell army commanders to organize positions, or to use artillery on rearguards, or the like. Obviously it was useless to detail the direction for the offensive until the left wing was reconsolidated. Who could tell what the enemy would do meanwhile? When the new group (the 6th Army) was up and ready, there would be time enough to think about the details of the offensive. The mere fact that such orders were issued at this time either indicates that an entirely and completely erroneous view of the situation still existed at French Headquarters, or possibly that it was necessary to satisfy stupid and

malicious civilian criticism. However the French Army Command succeeded in operating at all, influenced and hampered as it was by the interference of officious politicians, and incompetent—not always honest—ministers, is a mystery. It is, however, grimly humorous that if the interference of politicians and journalists nearly lost the Allies the war, it was overtrust in military theorists that definitely did lose Germany the war, even though the skill of the same military theorists won her some victories.

All we can gather from these instructions is that the general idea was to retreat in order to regain the time for offensive action with a new army.

August 25th. Retreat continued—Battle of the Gap of Charmes continued—Combat of the Orne River.—On the left the British continued their retreat, but split into two detachments, leaving the Forest of Mormal between 1st and 2nd Corps. This was done apparently under the mistaken idea that the Forest is not passable. There are quite good roads through the Forest.

The cavalry supported by the rearguards of the 2nd Corps had a very hard day. 2nd Corps got back to the line Le Cateau-Caudry. The 4th Division newly arrived from England was placed on its left beyond Caudry. Some of the cavalry was collected south-west of Cambrai, some at Le Cateau. 1st Corps was about Landrecies.

During the night 25th–26th German troops of 1st Army which had passed through the Forest of Mormal, and some troops of IIInd Army, attacked the British 1st Corps posts at Maroilles and Landrecies, but were driven off with heavy loss. Orders to continue the retreat next day were issued, but during the night the commander of the 2nd Corps informed Sir John French that his men were too exhausted to march early on the following day, and that he must stand and fight. Orders to this effect were sent to the troops. It is manifest from the way the troops were distributed by the commanders that the impression

given by the corps commander to his subordinates was that he intended to fight a decisive action.

The position of 4th French and left two corps of 3rd Army was not very different on the night of the 25th from that of the 24th. The retreat had been continued, but only to more suitable positions. The Army of Lorraine working with 6th Corps of 3rd Army on the line of the Orne River had a fine success against the German XVth Corps and "Corps Oven" on the left of Vth German Army. On the night of the 25th-26th, however, the commander of the Army of Lorraine was ordered to report for duty as commander of the new 6th Army, to be collected at Amiens. 7th Corps from Belfort and several reserve divisions, two from Army of Lorraine, were ordered to that point. Thus Army of Lorraine could not continue its movement.

1st and 2nd Army also were not unsuccessful. 20th Corps was unable to push its success of the 24th and was driven back, but in the Battle of the Gap of Charmes (or the Mortagne) the attacking troops were counter-attacked by 16th Corps and 8th Corps with success. The right of 1st Army had, however, to draw back towards Epinal.

August 26th. The Battle of Le Cateau—Retreat continued.—It is not a matter of much importance whether or not Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's decision to stand and fight at Le Cateau was right or wrong. The corps commander had no option, for on his left by 4 a.m. 4th Division was hotly engaged, and very soon after on his right German troops broke into Le Cateau, but were driven out again. Gradually the Germans brought into action the guns of three corps (IVth Reserve, IVth, and IIIrd). It was some time, however, before the infantry moved forward, and when they did they were met with such a fire that only at one or two localities were they able to approach close to the British line. However, the odds were too great. The left flank was already turned. In spite of

all that two cavalry brigades and the 19th Brigade could do, the right was also turned and Le Cateau occupied. Not long after midday the corps commander ordered that the action be broken off and the troops retire as best they could. These orders were carried out. The British were not pursued, which indicates how badly the Germans were checked. It is lucky that this was so, for the disorganization consequent on such a method of breaking off a fight naturally led to considerable confusion on the roads. The line of retreat was nearly due south towards St. Quentin. Sordet's cavalry corps had marched across the line of the 5th Army and British on the 25th, aggravating the difficulties. It appeared south of Cambrai in the afternoon of the 26th, and certainly assisted to protect the British left in its difficult retreat.

There was a little fighting meanwhile away to the left where d'Amade's Territorial divisions and some of the men of one of his reserve divisions were forced back from Cambrai, not without a fight. One of his reserve divisions was in action near Douai.

1st British Corps and 5th Army continued their retreat due south without serious fighting except near Rocroi, on the extreme right.

3rd and 4th Armies crossed the Meuse, destroying the bridges. Contact between 4th and 5th Armies was maintained south-west of Rocroi. De l'Angle (4th Army) seems to have proposed a definite offensive for the 27th, but abandoned the idea, maintaining the intention of vigorously defending the line of the Meuse with his right and centre even though his left must come back.

The 2nd Army continued to make some progress in clearing its front.

On August 26th the Army of Alsace was formally dissolved and amalgamated with 1st Army. The right of 1st Army tried to push forward on the 26th, but without much success. Most of the ground gained had to be abandoned.

August 27th and 28th. Retreat continued—Battle of Signy l'Abbaye.—During August 27th and 28th the retreat of the left continued as rapidly as possible. On the extreme left Sordet's cavalry fell back over the Somme. The Territorials withdrew from Arras in haste towards the south.

D'Amade's two reserve divisions which were to form part of the new 6th Army were in action near Bapaume and drove in successfully a German advanced guard.

The British got back over the Oise to the line La Fère-Chauny-Noyon. There had been thought of standing on the line of the Scheldt-Somme Canal, but the disorganized condition of the troops made this impossible. Besides, there was still no adequate protection for the left.

5th Army fell back with hardly any fighting except with cavalry. The line of the Oise was abandoned, and the army marched to a line approximately from Marle to La Fère.

4th Army successfully held the line of the Meuse with its right and centre, driving back hostile troops as they crossed. Its left (9th Corps and 52nd Reserve Division), which had fallen back south of Signy l'Abbaye in touch with 11th Corps to its right, counter-attacked strongly and defeated the pursuing Germans in an action of much interest.

3rd Army had 4th Corps taken from it and the remainder of the Army of Lorraine attached to it. At the same time General Sarraill replaced Ruffey in command. It had hardly any fighting.

Projected offensive to check the pursuit—Sir John French reports that the British Army cannot keep the field.—It was quite clear on the 27th that the projected line had already been lost from which the new offensive foreshadowed by Joffre's instruction of August 25th was to be launched.

An offensive from the line Verdun-Laon-Amiens being impossible, a further retreat was ordered; but in order to gain time and room, Joffre decided that his left wing—5th Army, British, and the forces of Manoury and d'Amade north and east of Amiens—was to turn and attack. Joffre

wished to do this on the 28th, but it was impossible. The direction which he gave de Lanrezac for attack was the line Guise-St. Quentin. The main blow was to be struck by 5th French Army, but the support of the British was expected. D'Amade's two reserve divisions would move again eastwards, and the 7th Corps of the new 6th Army, which was now east of Amiens, would also move east.

Unfortunately on the 28th Joffre was informed by Sir John French that the British Army was quite unable to take the offensive on the 29th, or even to stand its ground. Its commander and the commander of the 2nd Corps stated that the British Army must be withdrawn to rest and refit. It must be taken back to the base, to England, to its ships, to anywhere out of the fighting.¹

Whether or not this attitude of Sir John French decided Joffre to make his offensive of the 29th merely a limited one, or whether he had already decided on only a limited objective, is not known. At any rate on the night of August 28th-29th orders were issued to 4th Army to continue its retreat. At the same time the left wing of 4th Army, two corps, a reserve division, and a cavalry division were formed into a group under Foch. This was the nucleus of a new army afterwards called the 9th Army.

August 29th. Battle of Guise-St. Quentin and actions at Combles and Proyard—Retreat continued.—On August 27th 5th Army had been with its left not far west of Guise and its right towards Rumigny. In order to get into position to attack towards Guise-St. Quentin on the 29th, dispositions had to be made during the course of its retreat on the 28th. On the right Abonneau's group (4th Cavalry Division and 51st Reserve Division) was to keep touch with the left of 4th Army (Foch's group), 3rd and 18th Corps were to attack directly on St. Quentin-Guise, while

¹ Anyone who knows the British Army of that date knows that this was a mistaken idea of its commanders. The army had suffered trivial losses as losses were afterwards understood. The command was defeated, however, and "une armée n'est rien que par la tête."

10th Corps echeloned on the right guarded and supported 3rd Corps. 1st Corps was in reserve behind the right wing. To replace the British Valabrègue's reserve divisions were to guard the left on the La Fère-St. Quentin road.

At first the attack towards St. Quentin went well, though it is recorded that the men of 18th Corps who had been told that the British would be moving forward on their left were bitterly disappointed when they did not appear. The 5th Army had struck full against von Bülow's IInd Army, the main strength of which was near St. Quentin. VIIth Corps soon struck in against the left of 18th Corps and the reserve divisions, which were forced back. Away to the west the 7th Corps and d'Amade's troops and the cavalry were unable to make headway against the masses of von Kluck and von Marwitz, but at Proyart and at Combles the German advanced guards were checked and the German march delayed. But on the right of 5th Army 1st Corps struck in in support of 10th and 3rd. The German Guard Corps, outflanked and defeated, was driven back across the Oise. At some points the French crossed the river in pursuit.

Thus Joffre's strategy proved successful. The advance of the 5th Army seriously delayed the German right wing, and time was gained.

Meanwhile the British, on the afternoon of August 29th, were steadily retiring away from the sound of the guns. It is hard to excuse this betrayal—for it was no less—of an allied army. True the British Army on the night August 23rd–24th had been left in the lurch by 5th French Army, but after all that is no excuse. As a matter of fact Sir John French *could* have drawn back to the line Maubeuge-Bavai on the night August 23rd–24th, and thus avoided being left isolated.

August 30th. Retreat continued.—On August 30th 10th and 1st Corps continued their movement of the 29th by skilful and successful offensive action. Orders to retreat, however, were received in the forenoon, so the action had

to be abandoned. Unfortunately 51st Reserve Division on the right of 1st Corps retired rather prematurely on receiving their orders, so the right division, 1st Corps, got into a nasty position, from which it was extricated only by cool and skilful leadership. The rest of the army and the 6th Army troops retired without serious difficulty.

On the right of 5th Army Foch's detachment (9th and 11th Corps) was seriously engaged north of the Aisne near Rethel. A fine counter-stroke by Humbert's colonial division of 9th Corps¹ gave the French a useful success.

The result of the battles of Guise-St. Quentin, Signy l'Abbaye, and Rethel was undoubtedly a great success for the French, for the pursuit was checked and the men's *moral* was raised by their tactical successes. It is not clear why Joffre at this time replaced de Lanrezac by Franchet d'Esperey, for de Lanrezac had shown himself a fine leader. Probably incompatibility of temper accounted for this as well as the change of Sarraill for Ruffey in 3rd Army.

August 31st and September 1st. Retreat continued.—The retreat was continued steadily on the 31st with very little fighting. The left reached the line, approximately, Beauvais-Verberie with the British on the line of the Automme River to Villers-Cotterets. On this line there was a little fighting. At Verberie there was a rearguard action on September 1st. At Nery a British cavalry brigade was surprised in bivouac, but quickly rallying they soon showed that if bad luck allowed their outposts to be surprised, they could retaliate strongly. The Germans were hunted away, and lost twelve guns² which, however, could not be brought off. At Villers-

¹ 9th Corps had been part of 2nd Army. One division was taken away, also Corps Headquarters, and sent to 4th Army. The other three brigades became involved in the fighting on the Grand Couronné. Humbert's colonial division was then given to 9th Corps to complete it.

² As an example of German historical accuracy we may note that their writers claim the capture of six British guns in this action, and never mention their own loss of twelve. As a fact, "L" Battery, R.H.A., was put out of action in this engagement, but the guns were not lost. The Germans abandoned their guns in panic flight, and but for lack of time they could certainly have been brought off as trophies.

Cotterets there was a very sharp rearguard action in which the British guards gave as good as they got, but unfortunately that was a serious loss of men.

JOFFRE'S NEW GENERAL INSTRUCTION

On September 1st another general instruction of great interest was issued by General Joffre.

This order definitely prescribes the extreme limits to which the retreat is to be carried and the zones of armies. Its clearness is in marked contrast to the last one which we quoted almost *in extenso*.

The final line admissible was to be :

2nd Cavalry Corps behind the Seine south of Bray.

5th Army behind the Seine south of Nogent.

Foch's detachment behind the Aube, south of Arcis.

4th Army behind the Ornain, south of Vitry.

3rd Army (plus remnants of Army of Lorraine and less 4th Corps which was to come to 6th Army), south of Bar le duc.

The 6th Army, it will be noticed, is not given a definite line to which to retreat. This army, with the mobile troops of the Paris Garrison, and such troops as the 1st and 2nd Armies could spare, was in effect a general reserve. The British Army is also not mentioned by Joffre at all.

We now see clearly what a very long retreat the French were prepared to accept. The Government were leaving Paris for Bordeaux. The British had already transferred their base to St. Nazaire.

At the same time a general order was issued amplifying and explaining the intentions of the Chief. If, at the beginning the French strategy and command had seemed halting and feeble, all that was gone now. The march of events had removed the interference of the politicians of Paris, little men of little mind accustomed to look for petty means to gain petty ends. Joffre had clearly found his feet, and from

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now on his strategy is clear and simple, direct and vigorous, and consequently successful.

The retreat may be said to have ended on September 4th when the army stood on the line shown on Map 6.

By August 31st a change of direction in the march of 1st German Army had become marked. Instead of marching directly on Paris or on the Seine below Paris, this army was marching south-east in close touch with the right of von Bülow. Its columns passing the front of 6th Army were therefore exposing themselves to attack from the west. It was an opportunity to hit with his left that Joffre was waiting for. In order to see how this came about we must now turn to study the German movements.

THE GERMAN ADVANCE

From Brussels the IIInd Cavalry Corps pushed well out to the west to cover the outer wing of the 1st Army. One division of the corps moved far to the west via Audenarde, but the other two divisions were in front of the right corps of 1st Army.

1st Army had to drop a corps (IIIrd Reserve) to watch the Belgians and marched with four corps, IIInd, IIIrd, IVth, IXth, in front line. IVth Reserve followed IIIrd Corps.

The right corps (IIInd) moved via Grammont and Ath towards Condé and Cambrai, the left corps (IXth) via Soignies and Binche to between Charleroi and Mons.

IIInd Army moved with its left on the Meuse and its right on Charleroi. Guard Reserve Corps stopped at Namur. The other four corps were in line. IIIrd Army moved with its right towards Namur and its left towards Givet. XIth Corps stopped at Namur. Two corps were then in line and one (XIIth Reserve) was in reserve.

IVth Army, which had to give up a corps (VIth) to Vth Army, and thus was only four corps strong, moved towards the line Fumay-Mezières with all four corps in line.

Vth Army moved against the line Carignan-Verdun.

Six corps, including the garrison troops corps, "von Oven," were in line with one corps (Vth Reserve) in reserve.

VIth and VIIth Armies attacked the Gap of Charmes.

Now from these dispositions it became clear at once that the retreat of 4th French Army left the German IIIrd Army quite free to operate against the right flank of 5th French Army. This army on August 23rd was facing north with its right on the Meuse and its left on the Sambre protected by the British to the west, who had reached Binche. But it was not so much the defeat at Charleroi as the disaster of losing the passages of the Meuse about Dinant that forced de Lanrezac to retire at once in order to gain touch with 4th Army, whose left division (a reserve division) was still holding the Meuse above Givet, where it had not been seriously attacked. On the 23rd, on the German right, the left (IXth) Corps of Ist Army and the right corps (VIIth) of IInd Army, which were approximately level, struck Binche and Mons, but IInd and IVth Corps only came into line gradually as the columns completed the longer marches. The check caused by the British action on the 23rd and 24th at Mons gave time to IInd Corps to get up, but IVth Reserve only reached Ath on the 4th. The IInd and IVth Reserve Corps did tremendous marches on the 25th, so that on this day IInd Corps was approaching Cambrai and IVth Reserve was at Valenciennes. But IXth, on the left, moving towards Maubeuge was delayed by the fortress, and had to drop in rear of the next corps to the right (IIIrd), which passed through Mormal Forest on the 25th. This explains why IXth Corps was not up on the day of Le Cateau—August 26th.

On the other hand, IVth Reserve marching hard and early on the 26th came up for the battle. IIIrd German Corps by the way passed right through the Forest of Mormal in two columns on the 25th. So much for the necessity which induced the British command to separate the two corps because the Forest was said to be impassable. The Staff were provided with many motors and horses. It is a pity that one of them did not reconnoitre the area.

Von Marwitz's cavalry corps had one division, as we have seen, away towards Douai and Lille,¹ scaring the peasants and displaying their heroism to the girls. It tried to make a raid on the communication on the 24th but failed ignominiously. This left only two cavalry divisions to do battle with Allenby's four brigades, not nearly a sufficient superiority of numbers to compete with Allenby's superb horsemen. German cavalry has always been poor, except for heavy shock action. The reason is that Germans do not ride well as a rule. Even in the great days of German cavalry under Frederick the Great the German cavalry always charged at a trot. Cromwell's and Marlborough's Dragoons had always charged at speed.

Von Bülow, commander of IIInd Army, had been placed in command of the German right wing on August 20th. The general direction of his march was to be south-west. It is very interesting to note how ill informed the German command was of the allied movements.

Von Bülow states that on August 20th the following "situation" of the allied troops was given by Army Headquarters :

"On the Meuse between Namur and Givet 1st and 2nd and perhaps also 10th French Corps.

"South of the Sambre between Namur and Maubeuge there are enemy troops moving forward, so that between Namur and Charleroi on the 22nd in the neighbourhood of the Sambre there will be at the most two army corps. West of the line Charleville-Fumay about three corps are marching northwards, among them probably reserve divisions. It is unlikely that they will have reached the line Philippeville-Avesnes on August 20th.

"We must reckon with a landing of English troops at Boulogne and their employment from the direction of Lille.

"We have reason to believe that landings in any strength have not yet taken place."

So much for the bugbear of the sensation-mongering Press on the matter of the German spy system.

¹ Perhaps this division was reconnoitring for the British, see *infra*.

As soon as IIIrd Army was across the Meuse, Ist Cavalry Corps was transferred to IInd Army.

We find that on August 26th its orders were to operate against the British rear. These were the German cavalry which appeared on the right of 2nd Corps at Le Cateau.

On August 26th IIIrd Army's right flank ($\frac{1}{2}$ XIIth Corps) was marching on the line Marienburg-Auvillers les Forges. Its centre marched on Rocroi.

IInd Army moved with its right on Maubeuge and its left on Philippeville.

As IInd Army was marching south-west and IIIrd Army southwards, a gap began to grow between IIIrd and IInd Armies, which we find caused alarm to von Bülow.

On August 27th the command of Ist and IInd Armies was separated again. IInd Army had to drop a corps (VIIth Reserve) to besiege Maubeuge with its garrison of 45,000 troops. Thus IInd Army was reduced to four corps plus a cavalry corps.

IIIrd Army dropped half XIIth Reserve Corps to besiege the old fortress of Givet; thus it was reduced to two and a half corps.

IVth Army evidently awaited the advance of IIIrd up the left bank of the Meuse.

After Le Cateau, von Kluck marched his corps in the direction Amiens-St. Quentin, von Bülow marched on the line St. Quentin-Marle. Von Bülow brought Richtofen's Ist Cavalry Corps (two divisions) across to his right front.

IIIrd Army continued to march on Rocroi. Its right corps followed the line Marienburg-Rumigny-Signy l'Abbaye. Thus the gap between IIIrd and IInd Armies gradually became considerable. Furthermore, there was a gap of several miles between von Kluck's left corps (IXth) and his second on the left (IIIrd). IInd Army also was very extended.

Consequently on the 29th the position was approximately as follows: four corps of Ist Army were from Bapaume to Peronne with one corps (IXth) near St. Quentin. Von

Marwitz's cavalry was away to the west. IInd Army had VIIth Corps and Richtofen's Cavalry Corps near St. Quentin, Xth Corps south of Guise, and Guard Corps south of Etreauport, while Xth Reserve followed VIIth towards St. Quentin. IIIrd Army had one division, XIIth Reserve Corps, about Aubenton, XIIth Corps north of Signy l'Abbaye, and XIXth Corps west of Mezières in touch with the right of IVth Army, which had crossed the Meuse near Donchery.

It is now quite clear why 5th French Army was able to make a successful advance on the right, but was unable to make head on the left. There can be little doubt that had the two and a half British corps and the cavalry attacked west of St. Quentin on the 29th, von Bülow's Army would have suffered a serious defeat, provided of course that the British attack had been resolute and well led, which, as the 1st Corps, under Sir Douglas Haig, would have borne the brunt of the action, it certainly would have been. Had Sir John French on August 28th not refused to co-operate, doubtless Joffre would not have ordered the withdrawal of 4th Army after its success at Signy l'Abbaye. The gap in the German line between IIIrd and IInd Armies would have been found. Franchet d'Esperey with the 1st and 10th Corps would have turned von Bülow's left, and Foch with 9th and 11th Corps would have turned von Hausen's right.

On August 28th a German officer from Army Headquarters had brought information as to the general situation and orders for further operations. 1st Army was ordered to march on the lower Seine, IInd Army on the line La Fère-Laon on Paris. But the events of the 29th woke German Headquarters to their danger. On August 30th at 9.55 a.m., Bülow received orders to turn south with his left directed on Reims. At the same time von Kluck was ordered to turn south-eastwards and to march echeloned in the right rear of IInd Army to guard its right. It is difficult to understand the point of view of those who

consider that the right German wing should have continued its march on Paris.

The first German scheme—to *envelop* the French left flank—had failed, owing to the opportune arrival of the British and their magnificent fighting on the 23rd, 24th, and 26th. At Mons and Le Cateau and on the two intervening days the cavalry and four corps of Ist Army had been so badly shaken and delayed that no pursuit was attempted, and touch was actually lost with the British. The Germans seem, however, to have assumed that the British were completely routed, and the events of August 28th, when Sir John French stated that his army was for the present out of action, go far to justify this opinion. But even so, it was now clear that the German right wing had pushed too far westwards in their effort to envelop the French right, without making definitely certain that the British Army was *hors de combat*. On August 30th, then, von Kluck and von Bülow turned the heads of their columns farther eastwards, impelled by the necessity to follow up the French Army, which was still undefeated.

It is manifest that when an army abandons a field of battle in good order it imposes upon its adversary the direction of march. The adversary must follow it up and bring it to battle. It is clear that in this case Paris could not be an objective until the French Army was driven away from it. Joffre was retiring to the front Verdun-Paris with the two great entrenched camps to guard his wings. Between these points the German right must seek a decision.

It was this turn of the heads of the columns which brought Ist Army against the British rearguards on the line of the Automme on September 1st. During September 2nd, 3rd, and 4th the advance of IInd, IIIrd and IVth Armies was delayed by the skilful rearguard tactics of the French 5th, 9th, and 4th Armies. Ist Army on the other hand met no opposition from the British and 6th Armies, which fell back rapidly. Consequently von Kluck allowed his ardour

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Situation of the Germans
1914.

August 24th.
August 29th.
September 5th.

Scale of Miles.

10 20 30 40 50 Miles

• to outrun his discretion. Leaving only IVth Reserve Corps to guard against an attack from Paris, he pushed the rest of his army across the Marne and then across the Grand Morin to support von Bülow in his attack on the French 5th Army. The map shows at once the danger of his position. Had he held the line of heights at Dammartin and the line of the Grand Morin, he might have safeguarded the German right effectually.

CHAPTER VI

THE FRENCH COUNTER-STROKE

The Battles of the Marne and Nancy—The Germans escape and retreat.

ON September 4th the position of the opposing armies was as follows. (See map facing page 80.)

1st Army (3 corps, 4 reserve divisions, 1 cavalry division) had been driven back to the outer works of Epinal, but its right still clung to the Vosges crests as far as Bonhomme.

2nd Army (2 corps, 4 reserve divisions, 1 cavalry division) lay along the Mortagne and the Grand Couronné to the Hauts de Meuse. It was standing strictly on the defensive.

The garrison of Verdun held the Hauts de Meuse and the Woivre plain and northern works of Verdun.

All these armies faced east.

3rd Army (3 corps, 4 reserve divisions, no cavalry divisions) lay from Verdun to Revigny.

It faced north-west.

4th Army (4 corps, no reserve divisions, no cavalry divisions) lay from Revigny to the Camp de Mailly.

9th Army (2 corps, 2 reserve, and 2 independent divisions, 1 cavalry division) lay from the Camp de Mailly, which was held by its cavalry division, to Sezanne.

5th Army (4 corps, 3 reserve divisions, 1 cavalry division) lay from Sezanne to Courtaçon.

2nd Cavalry Corps (3 cavalry divisions) lay from Courtaçon to Rozoy.

These armies all faced north.

The British Army ($2\frac{1}{2}$ corps, 1 cavalry division) lay behind the Forest of Crecy, facing north-east.

6th Army (including troops at Paris available, $1\frac{1}{2}$ corps,¹ 3 reserve and one composite (45th) divisions) lay north of the Marne from about Lagny to south of Dammartin, facing north-east.

A left flank guard (part really of 6th Army) consisting of one reserve division was towards Senlis and Creil.

1st Cavalry Corps (3 divisions) was behind 6th Army and very exhausted.

On the German side :

VIIth and VIth Armies (7 corps, 2 cavalry divisions) lay from Epinal to opposite Nancy, facing east, attacking 1st and 2nd French Armies.

Vth Army (6 corps, 4 Landwehr, and one independent divisions, 2 cavalry divisions) lay from Verdun to the Argonnes, attacking French 3rd Army and Verdun.

IVth Army (4 corps, 1 cavalry division) lay from the Argonnes to close to Vitry le François.

IIIrd Army ($2\frac{1}{2}$ corps, 1 cavalry division) extended from Vitry le François to the marshes of St. Gond.

IInd Army (4 corps, 1 cavalry corps) extended behind the marshes of St. Gond to Montmirail.

Ist Army (5 corps, 1 cavalry corps) had pushed on astride the Grand Morin stream and lay with its left at Esternay, its centre near Coulommiers, and its right near Changis. Von Marwitz's Cavalry connected it with its right flank detachment (IVth Reserve Corps), which was north of Meaux.

It will be noticed that Ist Army's left at Esternay was in advance of IInd Army's right at Montmirail.

The great battle which now took place between Verdun and Paris was fought on terrain which is, broadly speaking,

¹ Half 4th Corps had not yet come up. 13th Corps was to be withdrawn next from 1st Army for the left wing, and came in during the Battle of the Aisne. We may really consider 13th Corps and 4th Corps as Joffre's final reserve, which was on the move by train.

divided into three belts of very different type of country. From Verdun to the Argonnes the country is hilly and wooded. West of the Argonnes is the plain of Champagne, with soft, light, dusty soil. This is bounded on the west by the Falaise, or Scarp, of the Champagne, which defines a plateau of rolling country known as the Parisian plateau. This plateau is pierced by rivers: the Petit Morin, which rises in the marshes of St. Gond, the Marne, the Vesle and the Aisne, which run in deep valleys with steep sides. These rivers through the Parisian plateau form natural lines of defence, of which the strongest is that of the Aisne from east of Craonne to the junction of the Aisne and Oise. This line gives the impression of a fortified camp with great flanking bastions jutting out of it, and a clearly defined sky line behind which reserves can shelter and move without observation from the south bank.

6th, British, and 5th Armies were to fight on the plateau, 9th and 4th Armies in the Champagne plain, and 3rd Army in the wooded country of the Argonnes and upper waters of the Marne.

Joffre's orders for the counter-stroke were as follows:

6th Army with the 1st Cavalry Corps to force the passage of the Oureq and advance towards Chateau-Thierry. The British to establish themselves on the line Changis-Coulommiers ready to attack eastwards towards Montmirail.

(We must notice that these two armies had to change front from facing north-east to facing east.)

5th Army to extend its left to the line Courtaçon-Sezanne, and attack due north. 2nd Cavalry Corps to connect 5th Army with the British, 9th Army to cover the right of 5th.

Attacks to commence on September 6th. 3rd and 4th Armies to assume the offensive at the same time. On September 5th 6th Army moved out to its positions of readiness for the attack under orders from General Gallieni,

commanding the Paris Garrison.¹ It was clearly advisable to seize the height near Dammartin. The IVth Reserve German Corps at once counter-attacked, and doubtless the prisoners captured gave to von Kluck the information that there was a considerable force moving out of Paris. Von Kluck at once sent orders to IInd Corps to counter-march early next morning to the support of IVth Reserve Corps, which was still short of a quarter of its infantry left behind at Brussels.

On September 5th German Army Headquarters had issued an order that the whole army was to attack on the 6th. The right wing (Ist and IInd Armies) was to drive the British and 5th French Army over the Seine and then face westwards towards Paris, IIIrd and IVth Armies were to break the French centre, and VIth Army was to crush 2nd French Army at Nancy. Consequently all along the line, except on the extreme right of the German Army, both sides were advancing to the attack on September 6th.

Manoury's 6th Army attacked with vigour on the morning of September 6th. IVth German Reserve Corps and the leading troops of IInd Corps were driven back, so in the afternoon IVth Corps was withdrawn to assist Ist Army's right wing. This corps was crossing the Grand Morin between Coulommiers and La Ferté Gancher at about 4.30 p.m., and was ordered to march throughout the night to cross the Marne near La Ferté sous Jouarre.

The British advance struck only von Marwitz's cavalry and the left of the German IInd Corps. Although the opposition was feeble, the British made but little progress. It would appear that if the advance had been pressed with more vigour, Coulommiers, or at any rate the neighbourhood of Coulommiers, could have been reached on September 6th, in which case the northward movement of the IVth German

¹ 6th Army was technically part of the Paris Garrison and so under the orders of General Gallieni. The actual orders to attack were received by 6th Army from Gallieni. These orders were issued one day before Joffre's general orders for the great counter-stroke.

Corps might have been interfered with, with the result that, on September 7th, 6th French Army would have gained a victory. The work of 1st French Cavalry Corps on this day was feeble. Indeed, very little of the corps was used.

The advance of 5th French Army struck the two left corps of 1st German Army (IIIrd and IXth Corps), which, as we have seen, were pushed out in front of IInd Army, and whose right was now weakened by the withdrawal of IVth Corps to support von Kluck's right.

Although both von Kluck and von Bülow have written *ex-parte* statements of the events, it is not quite clear what happened. Most probably there were personal difficulties between the two men. At any rate, the two corps were forced back by 5th French Army. At 10 o'clock on the night September 6th—7th IXth Corps was sent for by von Kluck, and on the 7th at 10 a.m. he called IIIrd Corps away too.

9th Army on the right of 5th had a very hard day against von Bülow's left and IIIrd Army. 4th Army maintained its ground. 3rd Army met with some success. On the right German VIth Army attacked Castelnau's 2nd Army at Nancy and were completely repulsed.

We must notice here that on this day—September 6th—German General Headquarters ordered VIIth Army H.Q. and its XVth Corps to proceed via Brussels to St. Quentin. A new VIIth Army to be completed by IXth Reserve Corps now in Belgium and VIIth Reserve Corps now besieging Maubeuge was to be formed. It is quite certain that this army was intended by German Headquarters to be used against the Seine below Paris to carry out the envelopment from the west which had failed. We shall see, though not thus employed, it proved the salvation of the Germans at a critical moment. It formed, in effect, a General Reserve.

On September 7th the battle recommenced all along the line with the utmost severity. IInd German Army had

to pull back its right flank from Montmirail because the two divisions of Ist Cavalry Corps were now an inadequate protection.

The German cavalry continued to impose delay on the British. 4th German Cavalry Division of von Marwitz's corps was taken for the right of von Kluck's Army, leaving thus between Ist and IInd Armies two divisions of von Marwitz and two of Richtofen's Ist Cavalry Corps. Von Marwitz had with him certainly eight or nine battalions of Jägers, several battalions of Landwehr, and some artillery, but there is no doubt that the fight put up by the four cavalry divisions, even with these reinforcements, against the strong force, $2\frac{1}{2}$ British corps, the British cavalry, and Conneau's cavalry, was skilful.

5th French Army continued its advance to the line of the Petit Morin. 9th Army was again hard pressed, but held its own. 4th and 3rd Armies held their ground. Renewed German assaults on the Grand Couronné failed completely.

On September 8th the crisis of the battle was reached. The pressure of the British became so severe that von Marwitz had to be reinforced by three regiments with artillery from IXth Corps and a division of IIIrd Corps, but even so could only hold his own with difficulty. On von Marwitz's left the German line gave way.

Manoury's 6th Army was checked by von Kluck's IInd, IVth, and IVth Reserve Corps, and the remainder of IIIrd and IXth Corps were brought to near Crepy ready to attack Manoury's exposed left (northern) wing on September 9th. An attempt by Ist French Cavalry Corps to get round the German right failed. 9th French Army just maintained its ground.

The situation was one of great interest. Evidently German General Headquarters had focussed their attention on the events near Nancy, where the Kaiser had come with his Life Guards, ready to ride in triumph into the captured town. Consequently the decision as to the course to be

adopted in the West was left to von Bülow in consultation with a Staff officer from General Headquarters (a Lieutenant-Colonel Hentsch). Von Kluck, it is true, considered the situation satisfactory, but he was clearly a man of sanguine and impulsive temperament. Still from his immediate outlook it was satisfactory, for the counterstroke which his reserves would deliver on the 9th would certainly force back and perhaps defeat Manoury. But the great danger was the gap between Ist and IInd Armies. The British were almost through it already. Von Kluck's whole army was across the Ourcq River, so that between his left and von Bülow's right, north of Montmirail, stood only four cavalry divisions, one infantry division (of IIIrd Corps), and a composite brigade of IXth Corps at Montreuil, plus, of course, the Jägers belonging to the cavalry and some Landwehr and other detached reinforcements. Even if we admit that von Marwitz's position was sound from the Ourcq to Montreuil, still there was a gap of eighteen miles with hardly anything in it except two cavalry divisions. If Kluck had brought off a victory, he could not have exploited it, and it might not have eased IInd Army's situation, certainly not if the British were able to defeat von Marwitz. Under these circumstances von Bülow decided to retreat, and orders were issued to Ist and IInd Armies accordingly. On September 9th the British crossed the Marne, thus standing in rear of the forces attacking Manoury, but these forces were already on the march north. On the same day Foch's 9th Army, very hard pressed, brought off a splendid counter-attack, which drove the Germans over the marshes of St. Gond.

The part played in the battle by IXth German Corps was somewhat similar to that of d'Erlon on June 16th, 1815, when he marched to and fro between Ligny and Quatre Bras. It took hardly any part in the battle, was drawn off by von Kluck from von Bülow's support, and actually did little to support either army.

Thus ended in defeat the attempt to crush France in three

weeks, but the Germans had not given up all hope yet of defeating her in one campaign.

We may well ask ourselves why the German plan came so near success, and secondly why it failed.

The original success came, as must be quite clear, from the fact that Germany having the initiative had the selection of the decisive point. On this point she concentrated an army sufficient to secure a victory. This victory she gained, but not, as she had hoped, a completely decisive victory. No one can doubt that had the French fought the Battle of the Frontiers of August 20th to 22nd as they did, then, if there had been no British Army on their left, they would have been completely crushed. If the 1st German Army had not been delayed first on the Gette on August 18th by the Belgians, and then, more seriously, by the British on the Mons-Condé canal on the 23rd, it would undoubtedly have got completely round the left and rear of 5th French Army. Nothing but a miracle could have saved France.

Surely, then, we may attribute the German failure in the first place to their outrage on civilization when they tore up the "scrap of paper" on which their plighted word to Belgium was inscribed, cast decency and morals to the winds, and recklessly challenged the world.

When after Mons and Le Cateau the German marching wing was able to continue its advance freely, it was with much diminished strength. Two corps were on the way eastward to Russia, and an extra corps—IXth Reserve—had gone to Belgium, not, as was originally intended, to the marching wing.

Now there is this advantage inherent in the situation of an army manœuvring in retreat. It is falling back on to accumulations of supplies of arms, munitions, food, and men. An army advancing in an enemy's country is so situated, on the other hand, that it is constantly dropping men for guard duties, and its supplies have to be brought up over even longer distances. How many men had Massena before Torres

Vedras, or Napoleon before Moscow, of the hosts which followed them from their zones of concentration? Thus the Germans were becoming progressively weaker, the French progressively stronger.

More important, however, than this was the undoubted change in the French *moral* between August 23rd and September 4th. The French, who are the premier military nation of Europe, had recovered their old *moral*, had learnt modern tactics in the bitter school of war, and so were comparatively better troops on the Marne than on the Frontier. The fact did not fail to impress itself on the Germans. Von Bülow specially remarks on the change. When to all these causes for the decrease of the German superiority we add the gross military blunder made by von Kluck in crossing the Marne and Grand Morin with almost his whole army, we have causes sufficient to account for the German failure.

Looked at from another angle it is rather a matter of surprise that the Germans escaped so lightly on September 8th. The right wing had crossed the Meuse, twelve corps strong with five cavalry divisions, and crossed the Marne only nine corps strong. The Allied left on September 9th was, at the lowest estimate, eleven corps and five cavalry divisions. Apart, then, from the superior strategic position on September 6th, the Allies had a considerable superiority in numbers, still greater when we remember the depleted numbers of the German corps and the full numbers of those of the French.

CERTAIN POINTS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Controversy will rage in the future round three periods of that fateful fortnight from August 23rd to September 7th. First, what would have happened had Sir John French been under Joffre's orders on August 28th, so that he could not have refused to co-operate with 5th Army on the 29th?

So far as we can now judge the situation the result would

have been a defeat for the German right, and perhaps a catastrophe. Sir John French and Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's reported statement that the army was unfit to fight may be discounted at once. All who knew the army then, as for instance Sir Frederick Maurice, disagree entirely with this appreciation of the situation of the British Army. Sir Frederick Maurice, in his book *Forty Days in 1914*, says the troops were very tired, but only wanted a little rest and a good wash up. The command was demoralized, not the army. We may assume that 1st Corps would have advanced on the French left with the 4th Division echeloned on their left rear, and the cavalry covering the front and left. The battle would then have gone just as it did, with this exception: When VIIth Corps struck the French left they would have been themselves struck in flank by the British advance. This would have instantly called von Kluck's army to turn south-east. It would have come up by degrees and as it came up would have been met first by 4th Division and then by 2nd Corps, which would have had a halt all the morning of the 29th, and have been quite fit for the fray. All 1st Army could not draw off because of Manoury's troops, 7th Corps, and 61st and 62nd Reserve Divisions.

Meanwhile Franchet d'Esperey's 1st Corps would have, exactly as it did, outflanked and defeated the German Guard Corps.

4th Army would of course have held its ground, and might have carried its success of the 28th against IIIrd German Army's right a little farther.

Night would have found the nine corps of the German right wing gripped all along their line by the nine and a half corps of the Allies (5th Army five, British two and a half, Manoury two) *and their inner flank turned*. The nearest reserves were VIIth Reserve corps, besieging Maubeuge with its garrison of 45,000 men.

If the Germans had tried on the 30th for a tactical success and had gained it, they would no doubt have escaped

from their danger, but had they failed, defeat was certain, utter defeat. Quite probably they would have reinforced Bülow's left from von Kluck's right, and manœuvred in retreat.

The next point which will certainly be a subject of controversy is this :

Was it necessary at all to go so far back as Joffre did ? Could not the line of the Aisne have been held, or at any rate a line Montagne de Reims-Upper Oureq-the Automme-Clermont-Beauvais ?

At present our knowledge of the internal condition of the French forces is too slight to allow even a useful discussion of this point. Some French writers hold that so long a retirement was quite unnecessary.

The third point is : What would have happened had the British advance on September 6th been more vigorous, and would it have been more vigorous if Joffre's directions had originally ordered an attack north, with the right refused, instead of an attack east towards Montmirail ?

This again is a subject which is not at present fully understood. Most French writers attribute slowness and lack of energy to the British advance. Certainly if the British had reached the Grand Morin near Coulommiers on September 6th the 6th French Army would not have had so hard a task ; but Joffre's orders to maintain liaison between the 5th and 6th Armies were categorical, and for the 6th the axis of advance was east, not north. But, on the other hand, only a short ten days before the British command had certainly been badly demoralized ; had it recovered all its *moral* on September 6th ? Personal, psychological, factors have more influence in war than one realizes when reading of battles and movements. The personality of the commander, the "feeling" among his immediate entourage, count for much. A bad breakfast may affect a man's whole mind for some hours. A whisky-and-soda on an empty stomach after a hard day's work may easily affect a General's judgment.

One last matter of interest to Britons remains to mention. According to its commander, the 2nd Corps was very badly demoralized by its rapid retreat. When Sir John Moore retired towards Corunna from near Madrid many of his units became badly demoralized. A few years later when Wellington fell back from Burgos certain units became very demoralized. Is this by any chance a national characteristic ? The Americans say that the British are bad losers. Is this so, and if it is, does this national trait show itself in our armies when forced to retreat ?

With these references to psychological factors which certainly afford food for thought we will leave the Western Front to see how Russia had fared at the hands of the Central Powers, and why at the crisis of affairs the German High Command had had to draw off two corps from the west to the east.

CHAPTER VII

THE EASTERN FRONT

(See Strategic Map at end of volume)

East Prussia—Tannenberg—The Russian retreat in East Prussia—The Battle of Lemberg—The Austrian retreat—Germany obliged to assist Austria.

It will be remembered that the broad outlines of the opposing concentrations on the Russian frontier were as follows :

Germany concentrated in East Prussia four corps, and in Silesia a Landwehr corps under von Woyrsch. Between these two wings were only frontier guards, Landwehr, and Landsturm formations.

Austria concentrated 1st Army of three corps about Jaroslav, IVth Army of three corps north of Przemyśl, and IIIrd Army of three corps in East Galicia. One corps was in reserve to the whole army. On the left von Kummer's corps of Landwehr troops from Cracow connected with von Woyrsch, and on the right frontier guards, Landwehr and other second-line troops guarded the long eastern frontier of Galicia and the Bukovina under command of von Kovess, who had a portion of IIIrd Army at his disposal.

Russia commenced the concentration of five armies on her western frontier. 1st Army of four corps concentrated south-west of Kovno, 2nd Army of five corps concentrated about Lomza. 3rd Army concentrated three corps about Rovno south of the Pripet marshes, while 4th and 5th Armies, total six corps, concentrated about Lublin and about Cholm. From an early date another (an 8th Army)

began to concentrate about Proskurov. The 6th Army was in the Caucasus area.

TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES AND RAILWAYS

Looking at the map of Russia after following the operations in France, one is apt to forget how much larger the distances are. The topographical features of the theatre of war have been already considered. It remains to note that whereas road, rail, and canal communications are so numerous in Western Europe that one need hardly consider them when making only a broad general survey of the operations, in Eastern Europe the railways are of vital importance. The roads, too, exercise great influence on the operations. In East Prussia there are two important east and west railways intersecting at Insterburg. There are two important cross lines from Elbing to Allenstein, and from Danzig to Deutsch Eylau. In Poland the only railways which cross the Vistula from east to west cross at Warsaw and Ivangorod. From these two points four railways run back into Russia, via Vilna to Petrograd, via Siedlce and Polotsk also to Petrograd, via Brest-Litovski north of the Pripet to Moscow, via Lublin and Kovel to Kiev and to Odessa. These railways are connected by several cross railways, Vilna to Rovno, Grodno-Brest-Litovski-Cholm-Lublin, Ivangorod-Warsaw-Lomza, and other branches. From Germany into Poland there is really only one line from Thorn to Warsaw, up the valley of the Vistula. There are important lines from Breslau and from Posen to Cracow with connexion to the Polish railways at Czentochau and Kalisch. In Galicia there are two parallel lines north of the Carpathians running east and west. Five lines cross the Carpathians from the Hungarian plain to Neu-Sandez, Sanok, Sambor, Stryj, and to Kolomea over the Jablonitza Pass. From Lemberg a line runs to Rovno, and from Proskurov two lines diverge, one to Tarnopol, another to Czernowitz.

BOTH POWERS MOVE FORWARD

By August 3rd Austrians and Germans were invading Western Poland, and by August 15th the invaders were on a line the Kamienna River-Lodz-Thorn. But in East Prussia the Russians were first on the move. Rennenkampf's cavalry was soon engaged near Gumbinnen, and Samssonov with the 2nd Army was moving into East Prussia from the south. In the early engagements the Russians in very superior numbers forced the Germans to withdraw. At Gumbinnen the Germans were reinforced and counter-attacked. While the action at Gumbinnen was in progress von Prittwitz learnt that on the south Samssonov was advancing rapidly, and had achieved some success in an action at Frankenau. Von Prittwitz immediately ordered a withdrawal from the line of the Angerapp to that of the Alle and reported to Headquarters that he proposed a further withdrawal if necessary to the Vistula.

GERMAN RETREAT IN EAST PRUSSIA—HINDENBURG CALLED TO COMMAND

This did not at all meet the views of the German Headquarters, who promptly relieved von Prittwitz of his command, dispatched Ludendorf to East Prussia, and called up from retirement a stern old East Prussian soldier called Hindenburg. Hindenburg and Ludendorf proved an invaluable combination. Both are highly trained and educated soldiers. Both, however, suffer from some of the narrow prejudices which dominate the Prussian intellect.

Ludendorf cancelled the orders for retirement by telegram from General Headquarters before he started for the East. Ist Corps, which was moving back by rail, was directed to concentrate at Deutsch Eylau in rear of XXth Corps, which, as we know, was watching the frontier from near Thorn to the lakes. The line of the Angerapp was to be held as long as possible. On August 23rd 3rd Reserve

Division was moved to Allenstein and was attached to XXth Corps, XVIIth and Ist Reserve were behind the Angerapp, Ist Cavalry Division was at Insterburg. On this day, so Hindenburg relates, on the body of a dead Russian officer was found a copy of the dispositions and plan of campaign of the Russian right group of armies.

These were that Rennenkampf, keeping north of the Masurian Lakes, was to attack the line of the Angerapp from Insterburg to Angerburg, while Samssonov moved against the line Lötzen-Ortelsburg. It was therefore clear that Samssonov had got too far to the west, for his columns were reported to be on the line Ortelsburg-Soldau. Therefore the area from Lötzen to Ortelsburg was unoccupied. Hindenburg held the "Interior Lines." He decided to strike at Samssonov, while warding off Rennenkampf. In estimating the necessary minimum of strength to be left on the defensive wing, he counted on the superior fighting power of his troops, and on the difficulty, inherent in such operations as the Russians were conducting, of keeping proper liaison between the two wings. But he decided not only on the obvious tactical method, an attack on the exposed inner wing, but on a double envelopment of both wings. This was a most audacious conception and could not have succeeded against first-class troops. But the Germans were justified in considering themselves superior to the Russians. Hindenburg himself states that his men's *moral* and fighting spirit were raised by accounts of the brutal atrocities committed by the Russians against the helpless civilians in East Prussia. It seems amazing that the Germans were unable to see that in exactly the same way their brutal atrocities to civilians and prisoners would have the same effect on their enemy. Brutality is a first-class military blunder, as the German Commander-in-Chief himself proves.

THE BATTLE OF TANNENBERG

Hindenburg's plan was to leave the cavalry division with two Landwehr brigades and the Königsberg garrison to delay Rennenkampf, and then, while XXth Corps held Samssonov in front, Ist Corps, reinforced by local Landwehr and Landsturm troops, was to turn his left, XVIIth and Ist Reserve Corps were to turn his right.

On August 25th Samssonov's right was approaching Bischofsburg, and the deployment of the German Army was complete. On August 26th the left wing, XVIIth and Ist Reserve Corps, attacked Samssonov's right south of Bischofsburg. Meanwhile the weight of the Russian centre bent the line of XXth Corps back. On August 27th XVIIth and Ist Reserve Corps broke the enemy's right and Ist Corps broke the left. Though the line of XXth Corps bent again it did not break. Thus the Russian centre was surrounded near Tannenberg.

From August 28th to 30th the Russians made great efforts to break through the wall of fire that surrounded their centre corps, but without avail.

On August 31st Hindenburg reported laconically to General Headquarters that 13th, 15th, and 18th Russian Corps were utterly destroyed, while 1st and 6th had suffered severely.

REINFORCEMENT OF GERMANS IN EAST PRUSSIA

On this day Hindenburg heard that the 8th Cavalry Division, also XIth and Guard Reserve Corps, were being sent to East Prussia from the west at once, and with these reinforcements he was first to crush Rennenkampf, and then attack towards Warsaw, that is, to carry out the original plan, which, as we have noted, must have been the plan of the Central Powers if we judge by their original strategic concentration.

Now, in order to be free to carry out such an operation

as an attack from the north on Warsaw, it was obvious that Hindenburg must not merely repulse, he must actually cripple Rennenkampf's army.

By September 5th the army was deployed from Willenburg to Königsberg. Four corps advanced directly against the Russian positions, on the Alle River, while the cavalry divisions supported by a reserve division moved south of the lake area to turn the Russian left. In between, the Ist and XVIIth Corps, the victors of Bischofsburg, were to march right through the lake area via Lötzen. But Rennenkampf would not allow himself to be drawn into the toils. On the night 9th-10th he fell back; and though the pursuit was pressed with the uttermost vigour, he escaped.

FORMATION OF IXTH ARMY

On September 14th German General Headquarters had directed the formation of a new army, the IXth, to consist of VIIIth Cavalry Division, XIth, XVIIth, XXth, and Guard Reserve Corps. Hindenburg was appointed to command. He was also to keep control over the small VIIIth Army, now reduced to Ist Cavalry Division with Ist and Ist Reserve Corps—that is, the troops raised in East Prussia. Woyrsch's Landwehr Corps was also attached to IXth Army, and the army was ordered to assemble in Silesia. The outlook for the Austrians was reported to be bad, so for political reasons the German strategical plan must give way for the present.

THE BATTLE OF EAST GALICIA

The Austrian plan of campaign was to attack northwards between the Vistula and the Bug towards Lublin and Cholm, while IIIrd Army was to guard the right, and von Kummers, already established on the Kamienna, was to guard the left. This was the adoption of the usual manœuvre when holding the Interior Lines.

The force available for the main blow was only eight

corps if we include XIVth and XVIIth in reserve. We must again note that the Austrian Corps generally consisted of three divisions, the Russian always of three divisions, while the German had only two divisions in a corps. Most of the Russian divisions mustered nominally 16,000 infantry, while the Germans only mustered 12,000, and the Austrian 13,000 to 15,000. Thus in infantry a Russian corps equalled two German. But in artillery, on the other hand, a German corps equalled two Russian. In machine guns the German preponderance was even more marked. In artillery and machine guns the Austrians also were better provided than the Russians.

IIIrd Austrian Army, with which was incorporated von Kovess's flank detachments under some shadowy organization, consisted of three active corps, four cavalry divisions, and a number of Landwehr formations, frontier guards, and so forth. The three active corps seem to have been XIIth at Stanislaus, IIIrd about Stryj, and XIth about Lemberg. A Landwehr brigade was at Czernovitz, and an independent division was at Zaleszczyki, where there is an important bridge over the Dniester River. A division apparently of IIIrd Corps was at Brezanny on the Zlota Lipa. Von Kovess's cavalry was about Tarnopol. The XIth Corps had some Landwehr troops attached, and had a mass of cavalry out near Brody. Such was the general position of the defensive flank. The distance from Czernovitz to Lemberg is over eighty miles in an air line. The flank protection, consisting of about six cavalry divisions, and perhaps ten infantry divisions with an equivalent of perhaps two infantry divisions in second-line troops, was weak. The offensive mass which was to move north consisted of Ist and IVth Armies, total about four cavalry divisions and eighteen infantry divisions. The only general reserve was XIVth Corps at Sambor and the new XVIIth Corps being formed at or near Przemysl, total six divisions. It is obvious that as the northern wing moved north, there would be an ever-increasing gap between the IIIrd and IVth

Armies. Presumably it was hoped that cavalry on the line of the Bug River would guard this gap.

In spite of the information that a Russian Army was gathering at Proskurov, the Austrian commander, Archduke Frederick, and his Chief of Staff, Conrad von Hötzendorf, decided to carry out their intended offensive. The orders went out on August 18th to commence the move to the positions of deployment on the following day. Ist Army was to make good the line of the Tanev River, with its left on the Vistula and its right about Frampol, east of Yanov. IVth Army was to move up astride the Jaroslav-Rawaruska-Sokal branch line with its right near the Bug River and its left near Tomaszov, and then move northwards towards Cholm. IIIrd Army at Lemberg was to face north-east, while the whole of von Kovess's troops were ordered to close on their left. Finally it was decided to call up Boehm-Ermolli's IInd Army from Serbia to reinforce the right wing.

Orders to advance on August 22nd were issued on August 21st. On the 23rd the Ist Army met the 4th Russian Army on the march, and there was hot fighting at Krasnik on August 24th and 25th. Finally, the Austrians turned the Russian right by a sweep through Opole and the Russians fell back. At the same time Kummers, north of the Vistula, fought his way over the Kamienna; von Woyrsch also pushed forward. On the 25th Auffenberg's IVth Army struck Plehve's 5th Russian Army about Zamosc. Both armies were on the move. The Russian right was turned with assistance from Ist Austrian Army, and both Austrian armies gained ground. Both, however, soon found their paths barred by good positions, against which, on August 27th, they could make no progress. Up the Vistula and up the Bug valleys Russian reinforcements were moving. On the right flank in the Bug valley the Austrians were in danger of encirclement. To that point on August 27th the General Reserve of the Austrian armies, XVIIth and XIVth Corps, were hurried.

Von Kummers was ordered to pass the Vistula opposite Opole, so, with the reinforcements sent to the right of IVth Army, it was hoped to turn both wings of the Russian central mass.

But during the 27th the position of the Austrians was endangered, for on the whole line of the upper Bug, and the Zlota Lipa, the Austrian IIIrd Army and von Kovess's troops had been attacked. Russki's 3rd Army moving astride the railway had advanced from Brody towards Busk, while Ivanov's 8th Army had advanced via Tarnopol on Brezanny. Still a victory between the Vistula and Bug would soon ease the situation in the south.

On the 28th Dankl's Ist Army made progress on its right and von Kummers crossed the Vistula. It looked as if the 4th Russian Army would be encircled, but on the 29th and 30th the Austrians made little progress along the line of the Chodel River. Von Woyrsch's Landwehr corps was then called upon to help. On September 1st, though von Woyrsch's troops did their best, the Russians were able to reinforce their right beyond the Vistula by troops from Ivangorod, so all along the left Austrian wing the attack was unable to progress. IVth Austrian Army progressed on its left wing, but its centre about Tarnavatka had a very hard time and made no progress. But by August 30th the advance of XVIIth and XIVth on the extreme right down the valley of the Huczwa stream began to be felt, and on September 1st a fine advance of XIVth Corps under the Archduke Joseph completely broke the left of Plehve's 5th Army. The XIVth Corps approached Grubiesov on the Cholm-Rovno road.

But on the right the defensive wing of the Austrian armies had been routed by Russki, Ivanov, and Brussilov in front of Lemberg. Only the VIIth Corps of the IInd Army had yet come up from Serbia, and this was directed on Rohatyn to connect the group of von Kovess, who was guarding the bridges at Halicz and Jesupol with the remainder of IIIrd Army, which was in a great ring east of Lemberg. On the

left of IIIrd Army, August 30th and 31st, the Austrians had some success against the right of the Russian 3rd Army, but the advance of Ivanov's and Brussilov's troops drove the portion of the IInd Army on the right back across the Gnila Lipa, with the loss of the passages of the Dniester below Halicz.

Headquarters therefore ordered Brudermann and Boehm-Ermolli to withdraw to west of Lemberg with their right flank guarded by the great Dniester bogs between Sambor and Stryj. Lemberg was evacuated on September 2nd.

The strategical position was undoubtedly one of much interest. The northern battle was on an east and west front, the southern on a north and south front. In the north the Russian line had had its left (eastern) flank turned and defeated. But in the south, the left (northern) flank of the Austrian line was turned, its right (southern) was defeated. Zolkiev was in Russian hands, while the Austrians were pressing on towards Grubiesov. There was a gap here between the Archduke Joseph and Brudermann of fully fifty miles. Nor had Russki failed to take advantage of this. It was because his right corps was pressing north-west on August 30th and 31st to attack the Austrian XIVth Corps in rear that the Austrian IIIrd Army on its left had a slight success on the 31st. The two cavalry divisions which the Archduke Joseph had were not likely to delay the Russians long. What made it possible for the Austrians to escape from this precarious position was the difficulty of the country and the paucity of roads available for supply, not only of food, but also of munitions, to the advancing Russians. It must also be admitted that the Russians proved slow in pursuit and in attack.

To try to save the situation the Austrian Headquarters devised a complicated but skilful operation. The Archduke was to continue his victorious march against the Russian 5th Army in command of a detachment consisting of his own XIVth Corps which had been on the right, and the IInd Corps which had been on the left of IVth Army.

Under cover of this protection the rest of IVth Army was to change front half right back, to use an old drill expression. Meanwhile, obviously, Dankl's Ist Army would have a gap on its right flank. To cover this von Woyrsch was called upon to cross the Vistula and march across the rear of the Ist Army to its eastern flank. As soon as Auffenberg had got his army into position and IIIrd Army, now commanded by von Boreovic vice Brudermann, was reorganized, and IInd Army up, a counter-stroke was to be delivered to recover Lemberg. By September 7th Auffenberg was ready. But the Russians had also been marching north to outflank IVth Army, so the attempted attack of IVth Army soon came to a stop, for the Russians attacked in the direction of Rawa Ruska. On September 8th IInd and IIIrd Armies attacked and with some success. On this day, however, the troops of Brussilov away to the south were reported advancing up the Stryj, while in the north the disappearance of von Woyrsch had left a blank on von Kummer's left into which Cossack cavalry began to flow from the Ivangorod fortified zone.

DEFEAT OF THE WHOLE AUSTRIAN ARMY, WHICH RETREATS

On September 9th the Russians were attacking or counter-attacking all along the line. Archduke Joseph's small detachment was forced back by 5th Russian Army, Dankl's Ist Army could no longer stand against 4th Russian Army, now four corps strong. The whole Austrian right was forced back and obliged to retreat rapidly.

Once the retreat began it was almost impossible to stop it, for the troops became disorganized. The Russians followed as vigorously as their organization and the state of the roads allowed. On September 16th the Austrian rearguards were on the line of the San and the main bodies behind the Wisloka. Finally the retreat came to a halt on the line of the Dunajec, and the Biala, and the Dukla Pass. Detachments guarded all the passes over the Car-

pathians. The whole of Eastern Galicia and the Bukovina was occupied by the Russians, who at once proceeded to lay siege to Przemyśl.

The operation undertaken by the Austrians was the usual manœuvre when holding the "Interior Lines." They endeavoured to hold one of their enemies' wings while concentrating the main strength against the other. The operation failed for two reasons. Firstly, they were not in sufficient superiority at the decisive point, and secondly their defensive flank was not strong enough. Yet their position should have enabled them to carry out the operation.

The Russian strategy was not very good. They concentrated in two approximately equal forces and advanced both from the north and from the east almost simultaneously. Their vast superiority of numbers on the southern sector enabled them to turn the Austrian right, but even so they could hardly have saved their northern army had not the Austrian troops failed to show—in most cases—any great vigour in attack, though it is true they fought as well as the Russians.

It would appear that it was not till August 30th that the Russians began to realize what a great opportunity there was to break into the rear of IVth Austrian Army. The march towards Rawa Ruska by the right corps of Russki's 3rd Army on that day would seem to have been dictated chiefly by a desire to help 5th Russian Army, which had been severely defeated on the Huczwa River. As soon as the Russians did see their chance they utilized it well. It must be admitted that the attempt of the Austrian Headquarters to change their plan, to take advantage of holding the Interior Lines, and so to use their left as a flank guard, while striking with their right reinforced by the bulk of IVth Army, was a fine conception. It was unsuccessful chiefly because the IInd and IIIRD Austrian Armies were already beaten troops so they made but little head against

8th Russian Army, while Russki's 3rd Army, reinforced to, apparently, five army corps, was able to outflank and defeat Auffenberg.

THE RUSSIAN OPERATIONS AS A WHOLE

The Russians moved before their complete concentration was accomplished. This was forced upon them by two considerations. First to gain the initiative, and secondly to assist their allies in the west. It was certainly necessary for them to strike Austria as soon as possible, in order to be free to meet the more redoubtable adversary—Germany—when, if ever, having crushed France, her armies were brought east. It would appear, however, that the effort to attack both in East Prussia and in Galicia, at the same time, was unwise. Had six or seven corps instead of nine been placed opposite East Prussia on the line of the Narew and the Niemen, then an extra two or three would have been available from the first for the offensive mass between the Vistula and the Bug. It would appear that twelve corps commenced the attack on the Austrians. During the battle four more corps certainly came in. At the end of the battle it would seem that 4th, 5th, and 3rd Armies included thirteen corps. The commencement of the formation of a 9th Army had been undertaken at Warsaw, while 2nd Army was being reconstructed and one corps (3rd Siberian) joined 1st Army.

The attack on East Prussia seems to have been something of an afterthought arranged, partly because the concentration of troops in the area was easy, but chiefly to assist France. In this latter attempt it was certainly successful. Had XIth and Guard Reserve Corps moved south from Maubeuge instead of into the trains for East Prussia, there might well have been a different story to tell at the end of September 1914. The German population betrayed a cowardice in the face of the danger of invasion which never appeared among the populations of Belgium and France,

except in more or less isolated instances, such as that of Lille. Consequently the great General Staff, which had to keep up the reputation it had stupidly assumed of infallibility, was obliged to call off troops from the west to the east. In our opinion the failure of Germany dates from that moment. France and Britain were given breathing space in consequence of the Russian action, so the victory of Tannenberg, great though it was, did not offset the collapse of the German strategy due to their having to call off troops from the west *before* they had finished with the most dangerous enemy army, that of France.

CHAPTER VIII

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

WE have now followed the opening moves of the campaigns on five theatres of operations, Belgium, Serbia, France, East Prussia, and Galicia. The German defeat in France had drawn off IXth Reserve Corps, thus leaving the German forces too weak to attack the Belgian Army at Antwerp. The magnificent victory of Tannenberg in East Prussia had been offset by the Austrian defeat in Galicia. In Serbia the Austrians had been severely defeated. In fact the forces of the Central Powers were checked all along the line of the great theatre of war.

Excluding Belgium, in which the great weight and superior armament of the German masses had quite literally brushed aside the Belgian opposition, in each of these theatres of operations one side or the other had held the Interior Lines. In three cases the side which held those Interior Lines had been victorious, in one it had been defeated.

It may be of interest briefly to recapitulate the events in order to try to draw some general deductions. In France the position about August 23rd may be shown in a diagram, page 66—Diagram I. The principal German weight was on the right. This right wing overlapped the French front, which withdrew until the situation about September 4th was as in Diagram II. The French had now weakened their right to reinforce their left. This they were able to do because they held technically the Interior Lines. That is, that they were able to move troops from one part to

another part of the theatre of operations more rapidly than the Germans.

The total forces on the theatre of operations were not unequal. At first the Germans possessed a slight superiority, but by September 4th the balance had swung the other way. The French and British combined forces were superior to those of the Germans during the Battle of the Marne and the subsequent fighting in 1914. This was in no small degree due to the necessity which the Germans were under to reinforce the eastern front because of their allies' defeat.

At the commencement of the campaign neither the French nor the Germans had any strategic reserve at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief. Both sides put in all their weight at once. The French were able to find time to concentrate such a reserve. And it was the employment of that reserve on September 6th and the following day which gave them the victory of the Marne.

In Serbia, again, the army standing on Interior Lines triumphed. The Serbians had a thin line of troops watching the Austrians as in Diagram III, and kept the bulk of their army in reserve. The Austrians advanced with their main weight at the angle of the front. As soon as their plan was clearly developed and their troops committed, the Serbians put in their strategic reserve. They were stronger at the decisive point. The Austrians had no strategic reserve to redress the balance at that point and consequently were defeated. The total numbers on either side were not unequal, but the Serbians showed marked tactical superiority.

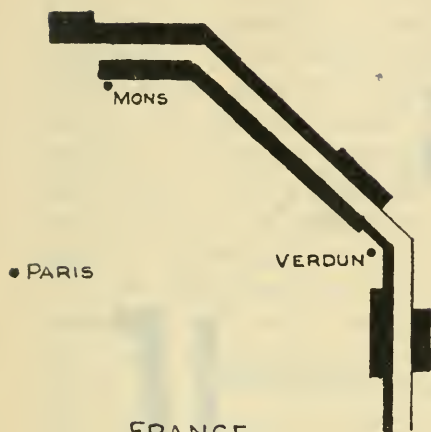
In East Prussia the situation was changed in the course of operation by the change of commander. On August 20th the situation was as in Diagram IV. The line *AB* was very thin, but Hindenburg decided to risk its defeat and concentrated all his reserves against Samssonov. He had time to defeat Samssonov and return to the support of his wing *AB* before *AB* was defeated. In this campaign the

Germans operating on Interior Lines were outnumbered by the Russians certainly over two to one, probably by fully three to one, yet Hindenburg was superior at the decisive point—Samssonov's inner wing—not only in *moral* and armament, but also in numbers. This is really fine strategy.

In Galicia the situation on August 25th may be said to be as in Diagram V. The Austrians tried to hold the Russian left group, separated as it was nearly one hundred miles from the Russian right group, long enough to break the Russian right group. In this they failed because their right wing was not strong enough to hold off the Russian left group. The Austrians then tried to draw from their offensive wing to reinforce their defensive wing. The situation during the early days of September was as is shown in Diagram VI. The three corps of IVth Austrian Army were drawn out of the battle in the north to use as a reserve to establish the battle in the south. It was only possible to effect this transfer because the Austrians held the Interior Lines; but though the conception was sound, the execution was unsuccessful principally because the tactics of the Austrian troops were bad. Reinforcements arriving for the Russians finally gave them the victory.

In studying these four sets of operations it seems to me that the outstanding points to note are, first, the great value of a strategic reserve, and second, the fact that, particularly in the opening battles of a war, the side whose tactics are superior has an overwhelming superiority. Plans of campaign based on sound strategic ideas are the business of statesmen as much as of soldiers. But tactics are purely a soldier's business. The tendency during times of peace is to devote attention to strategy rather than to tactics. Compared with the study of strategy, as learnt from the campaigns of former great leaders, the study of tactics is very dull. How officers hate tactical exercises on the map and on the ground! How unreal that sort of work seems! Not only is the study of tactics, especially minor tactics, dull, but tactics are constantly in a state of

Diagram I.



FRANCE.

AUGUST 23RD, 1914.

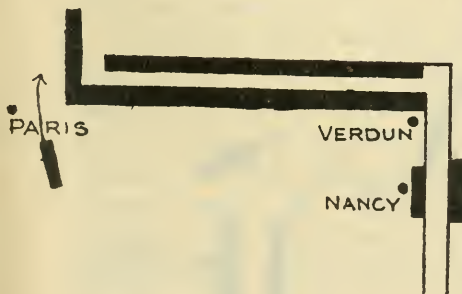
Diagram III.



SERBIA.

AUGUST 12TH, 1914.

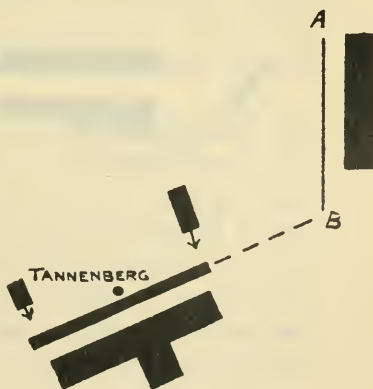
Diagram II.



FRANCE.

SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1914.

Diagram IV.



EAST PRUSSIA.

AUGUST 23RD, 1914.

Diagram V.

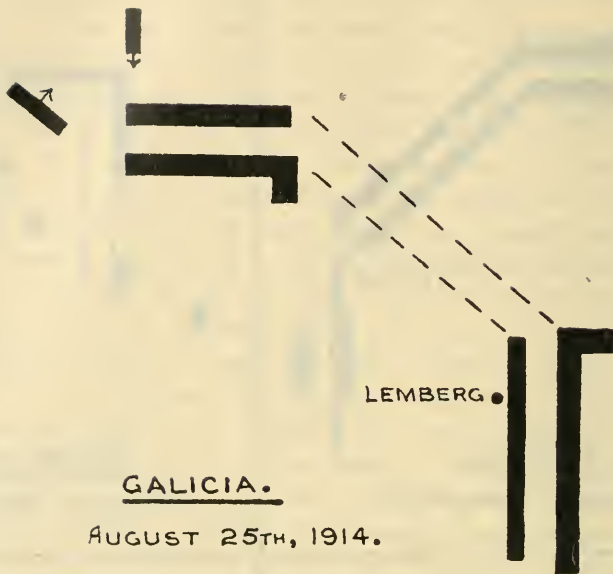


Diagram VI.



flux. The British, Serbs, and Russians had a great advantage over the French and Germans in that their armies had been comparatively recently engaged in wars of some magnitude. All accounts agree that the Russians and British too, *at first*, understood the value of field fortification better than the French and Austrians, and even the Germans. We have italicized the words "at first," for of course such a lesson is quickly learnt in the school of war, but at the cost of men's lives and perhaps at the cost of defeat in battle and even in the whole war.

In no army had the value of the aeroplane both for strategical and *tactical* reconnaissance been *fully* grasped, and the expense of outfitting the armies had been objected to by the civilian politicians. The Germans alone had comprehended the value of heavy field artillery. In no army had really adequate preparations been made for using field works to save men on the defensive sectors. Now many of these pre-war preparations required money. The politicians have control of the purse. If the civil population is not prepared to see that its politicians equip its army with the latest devices and the most up-to-date equipment, then the civilian population will have to suffer in the long run. The strong man who wishes to keep his house *in peace* must not only be armed, but he must have the latest pattern of arms.

We deduce, then, from these opening engagements two great lessons. The first is that a modern army has to be kept up to date in its tactical ideas and training. The second is that, at any rate in the opening stages of a campaign, a strategic reserve capable of manœuvre is of the greatest value. By capable of manœuvre we understand provided with good road or railway facilities and experienced in their employment, and also trained to march fast and far.

It may be permissible to consider here the use of cavalry on the modern battlefield, which did not follow the preconceived European cavalry theories on the subject.

When cavalry met cavalry they usually fought on foot as infantry. The cavalry screens were rarely broken through for the purpose of reconnaissance. The raids attempted by the Germans on August 24th and 25th were quite useless. As flank protection, as defensive screens to connect two wings of an army, or to fill the gap between two armies—in fact in a defensive rôle—cavalry was much used by all armies. Again and again cavalry divisions were employed as a mobile reserve to reinforce points which were in danger. But the offensive work of cavalry was unimportant, whether in pursuit or in action against bodies of its own arm. The cause is to be found of course in the modern small arm. After the era of the English longbow, small arms deteriorated. There can be little doubt that, but for the difficulty of the supply of ammunition (arrows), the longbow, as used by the English, was superior as a fire weapon to the musket. The use of the longbow went out because it was a difficult weapon to learn to use, and because it, and its ammunition supply, were not so easily manufactured and transported as weapons using gunpowder and ball. Even the advent of the cartridge did not make the musket the equal of the old longbow, as a rapid-shooting, long-range weapon. Consequently cavalry maintained an importance on the field of battle which the English archer seemed at one time to be wresting from the horseman. But when the breech-loader was introduced, and the cavalry themselves were armed with this weapon, the day of mounted action was drawing to an end. It is unlikely that cavalry in large bodies will ever again use the *arme blanche* except against troops which are liable to become panic-stricken, or are not armed in the modern style. But this is far from saying that the days of cavalry are over. Even the *arme blanche* may be used in moments of emergency on patrol or to effect a surprise. The cavalry supported by aeroplanes and light tanks, the natural adjuncts of modern cavalry, will probably play a very important rôle on future battlefields. But the tanks and aeroplanes must be integral parts of the

cavalry force, not separate corps, still less separate services owning separate chiefs.

A word must be inserted here on the fate of the French and Belgian fortresses and forts. Liège, as we saw, was captured in three days, and its forts were all in German hands within ten days. Namur held out only four days. Maubeuge with a garrison of 45,000 men was captured by VIIth German Corps, with heavy artillery attached, in a fortnight. Longwy, a small isolated place, held out for a fortnight. The garrisons of Hirson and Rocroi blew the places up. Lille, Condé, and La Fère were abandoned. At Montmedy the garrison tried to cut their way out, but were surrounded and butchered by the Germans. Les Ayvelles was abandoned by its garrison. Its commandant committed suicide. To what are we to attribute these failures? Certainly above all to the moral effect of the great siege howitzers. The opinion was freely expressed that fortresses are no longer of any value. Why? Even old-fashioned fortress works were found at times of great use. Anyone who ever sat in the battlements of Ypres while the great howitzers were thundering their projectiles upon the town will readily admit the value of such works. One really would think that the use of field fortification was a new discovery of the late war; that bombs and hand grenades, trench mortars, and liquid fire had never been used before. The truth is that in every war new weapons have been forged and very often their antidotes have been discovered in the course of the war itself. The original tank was the tower on wheels used to cross the moats of a defended fortress.

The use of fortification will not be discontinued by the experience of the latest war. Napoleon said that an army could dig itself in so as to become impregnable in three days, but he did not disdain to use permanent fortifications. The "dug-outs" constructed during the war by all armies were often permanent fortifications. With the advent of the tank, which doubtless will be improved, we may rather

expect to see the construction of permanent fortifications increased. Such fortifications will be temporarily impregnable points, localities, or even areas. The works of Verdun proved of great value. The situation of the great fortresses of Paris and Verdun dominated the strategy of both sides from August 23rd to September 6th, while the fortified areas about Warsaw and Ivangorod dominated the whole strategy on the Eastern Front.

The cause of the rapid fall of the fortresses early in the war was the moral effect of the big howitzer, the fire of which caused something approaching to panic in the defenders. But man is a creature of habit. He gets accustomed to anything, even horrifying things such as heavy shell fire.

Those who let their imaginations run riot in picturing a future war, with tons of poison gas projected from airships and with vast armies of tanks gambolling across Europe, are forgetting certain elementary facts of human nature. Wars will be won in the future as in the past by men, aided by machines of course, but not displaced by them. Successful anti-measures to the tank will certainly be forthcoming, and antidotes to poison are not difficult to produce.

Let us by all means have every warlike machine at our disposal to aid our men to attain victory, but let us not forget that, so far as we can see into the future, the infantryman will be, as in the past, the deciding factor of battle.

CHAPTER IX

THE RACE TO THE SEA

The German retreat from the Marne—The Battle of the Aisne—The manœuvres to gain the exposed flank.

As we have seen, on September 8th von Bülow, who was in a vague way in command of the German right wing, gave his opinion that it was necessary to retreat. At that moment the Ist Army had nearly overpowered Manoury's 6th Army, but the British were steadily driving von Marwitz's cavalry back, and the 5th French Army were making ground on the Parisian plateau, thus threatening the flank of the IIIrd Army, which was forcing back Foch's 9th Army south of the marshes of St. Gond. Between Ist and IIInd German Armies there was a big gap.

It is now clear that the retreat of the Germans was brought about not by Foch's great counter-stroke on September 9th, nor by the passage of the Marne by the British on September 9th, but by the bad strategic situation into which von Kluck's impulsive advance on September 3rd and 4th had placed his army. It is at least possible that had von Bülow's determination to hold been a little firmer the Ist Army would have defeated Manoury, in which case it is at least possible that Sir John French would not have pressed his advance, but would have fallen back behind the Marne.

Von Kluck's dispositions for the retirement were skilful. His army retired very swiftly under cover of strong rearguards. Elsewhere along the line from Verdun to the Oise the retreat was slower. On September 13th rearguards of

Vth Army still held St. Menehould, Les Islettes, and Clermont, while on September 11th von Kluck's main bodies were already over the Aisne.

On September 6th German VIIth Army Headquarters was ordered to St. Quentin. It was followed by XVth Corps, which trained via Treves and Brussels. The head of the corps reached Brussels on September 9th, and some of its troops took part in repelling a Belgian sortie. This Belgian action delayed the movement not only of IXth Reserve Corps, but also of part of XVth Corps. Maubeuge fell on September 8th. This released VIIIth Reserve Corps, which was to complete the newly constituted VIIth Army.

The allied troops followed swiftly after the retreating Germans. On September 12th Manoury, Sir John French, and the left corps (18th) of Franchet d'Esperey's 5th Army were all in touch with the Germans along the Aisne. Manoury had now been reinforced by 13th Corps drawn from Dubail's 1st Army, so he now had three active corps (7th, 4th, 13th), the 45th Active Division, a Moroccan brigade, and three reserve divisions.

On September 12th the right of 5th Army reoccupied Reims, but the Germans held on to the small hills, crowned with forts, on the north and north-east.

On September 13th the whole line attacked from Verdun to the Oise. The British and the left of 5th Army crossed the Aisne. The right corps of the British (Sir Douglas Haig's 1st Corps) and the left corps of the French 5th Army (de Maudhuy's 18th Corps) made good progress on the Craonne plateau, where runs the famous Chemin des Dames. As a matter of fact they had struck the gap between Ist and IInd Armies.

But the Germans had foreseen the danger. VIIth Army had hurried its VIIIth Reserve Corps up, and it arrived during September 13th. On the 14th the XVth Corps arrived to support it. The allied line was counter-attacked, and even forced back.

6th French Army did not have much success. It was

not till September 17th that this army used its 13th Corps supported by the 4th to endeavour to outflank the western wing of the Germans, which was heretofore held only by cavalry, but IXth Reserve Corps had now come up. This corps was used to prolong von Kluck's right west of the Oise. By now the front from Verdun to the Oise had stabilized. The line ran along the Aisne from its junction with the Oise to south of Berry-au-Bac, thence south-east to Montagne de Reims, and thence due east to Grandpré across the Argennes to Verdun.

Tactically the weak part of the line was certainly in the area between Reims and Grandpré across the Champagne plain. The Aisne front was terribly strong, and it was with difficulty that the British 2nd and 3rd Corps clung to the lower slopes on the northern bank. But the western flank of both armies was in the air, and naturally attracted attention.

FIRST ATTEMPT TO MANŒUVRE ROUND THE NORTHERN WING

As soon as it was clear that the attacks on Nancy had ceased, de Castelnau with headquarters of 2nd Army was brought to Amiens to command a new 2nd Army. With that marvellous celerity which characterized the French train transportation, 11th and 14th Corps were brought away from the 9th and 1st Armies, a 19th Corps was re-constituted, and three reserve divisions were brought up. All the independent cavalry corps of both armies were already at work on the exposed wings.

On September 23rd Castelnau's advanced guards were already on the march eastwards toward St. Quentin and La Fère, and were approaching Chaulnes and Ham. But the Germans had also adopted the same plan as the French. Their staff work was as good as that of the French. VIth Army headquarters was brought to St. Quentin, and XVIIIth, XXIst, 1st and IIInd Bavarian Corps, were sent to it.

On September 22nd XVIIIth Corps was west of Chauny,

approaching Noyon, and on the 23rd XXIst arrived at St. Quentin and Ist Bavarian at Valenciennes. But though Castelnau was checked, and even driven back, one great result had been achieved. As far as Noyon the line ran nearly east and west from Verdun, but from Noyon the line ran nearly north to east of Albert.

FIRST ATTACK ON VERDUN. FORMATION OF THE ST. MIHIEL SALIENT

While these operations were taking place in the north, the Crown Prince's Vth Army had been flung against the fortifications of Verdun in a first vain effort to storm the place. The attacks, which began on September 20th and were kept up for nearly a week, were directed against the eastern works of the place. The defence of the forts of Troyon, Camp des Romains (which was lost), and les Paroches forms a story of epic heroism, and incidentally goes far to prove that well-constructed permanent fortifications are of value in modern war. The only result of this attack, beyond the loss of tens of thousands of German lives, was the formation of the curious salient with its peak at St. Mihiel, which endured till 1918, when the Americans celebrated their appearance as an independent army by nipping it off by a fine feat of arms well planned and skilfully launched.

St. Mihiel gave a passage over the Meuse, but it was useless to the enemy.

THE SECOND ATTEMPT TO OUTFLANK THE NORTHERN WING

No sooner had the transportation of Castelnau's Army been completed than Joffre commenced the formation in the Arras-Albert area of another new army—the 10th—which was placed under de Maudhuy and consisted of 10th Corps from 5th Army, 21st Corps from 4th Army, the 45th Division from 6th Army, and a corps of reserve division. By September 28th this army was moving for-

ward, driving in the mass of German cavalry now reorganized in three corps, Ist, IInd, and IVth. But the German VIth Army had been strengthened by a division of VIth Corps, a division of the Guard Corps, the Ist Bavarian Reserve Corps, and finally the IVth Corps. Arras was held, but Lens was lost, and de Maudhuy's left was forced back from stretching a hand to Lille, which was now reoccupied, and defended by a small force.

The next army to be used to try to outflank the northern wing of the German was that of Sir John French. In the latter half of September representations were made to Joffre that a movement of the British to the northern (left) flank was advisable if only to shorten the lines of communication. British forces were preparing to disembark at Boulogne and Ostend. Clearly the movement could only be gradual, but the arguments in favour of it were certainly irresistible.

Before, however, considering the events which occurred when this army did move north, we must look at the position of the Belgian Army and consider the situation as a whole.

Broadly speaking, the line of battle now ran along the crests of the Vosges as far as the Bonhomme pass, thence in a nearly straight line to Verdun except for the indentation with its peak at St. Mihiel, thence in a generally easterly direction to Noyon, and thence north to west of Lille. German cavalry in considerable numbers were already pushing round the left flank towards Hazebrouck and St. Omer.

The attraction of the exposed wings had drawn away all available reserves from the battle fronts. The assaults that had been made upon these fronts had failed on both sides. One may well ask oneself on looking back at the situation whether the procedure adopted was the correct one. Between Montagne de Reims and the Argonnes the lines of battle lay on no strong tactical features. It would not have been a difficult operation for either side to have collected there a very considerable force in a very short time.

Had the French, instead of moving so many corps to the north, reinforced Foch's 9th Army with four corps drawn one each from 6th, the British, 5th, and 4th Armies, it is at least possible that the German line there would have been forced back to Rethel, with the result that the German right almost certainly would have had to conform.

In any case the troops which the Germans hurried to the right wing would have been forced to turn aside. Such action would—it would appear—have been as likely to force the Germans to withdraw in the north as the problematical result of the action of newly constituted armies hurried into action under chiefs they did not know and in terrain they did not know.

When later on an attack was delivered in this quarter it failed, it is true ; but by that time the German position had made up for the lack of tactical features by the thoroughness of its organization.

CHAPTER X

STALEMATE

The Belgians—Antwerp abandoned—The Battle of the Yser and Ypres.

THE BELGIAN MOVEMENTS

As we have seen after the fall of Liége the Belgian Army was withdrawn until it occupied a line Wavre-Tirlemont-Diest, but the advance of Ist German Army swept back the Belgian right about Wavre and Tirlemont. The Belgians fell back under protection of the forts of Antwerp. The Germans left behind IIIrd Reserve Corps of three divisions with several Landwehr brigades to watch the Belgians, and very shortly IXth Reserve Corps, which had been retained in Schleswig when the original strategic concentration took place, came up to Belgium. A brigade of IVth Reserve was left at Brussels.

FIRST SORTIE FROM ANTWERP

On August 25th King Albert's field troops attempted a sortie from Antwerp. The cavalry division and all five field army divisions took part in this attempt to take pressure off their allies, and to relieve Namur. The left was soon held up on the Malines canal, the centre made no progress towards Louvain. The right was counter-struck at Vilvorde and severely defeated.

It was just after the failure of this sortie that the outburst of savagery which marked the German occupation of Belgium became accentuated. Louvain, Aerschot, and other places were burnt and sacked with a brutality that

could not have been surpassed by the most barbarous savages. These acts were, as we have constantly pointed out, thoroughly unsound from a purely military point of view. No doubt the intention was to intimidate the inhabitants so that it would be unnecessary to retain large forces of occupation. The result was quite the opposite. The inhabitants were enraged, large numbers of police were required, the country became a most unpleasant "back-area," and the sympathies of the world were enlisted on the side of Belgium, and incidentally of her allies.

SECOND SORTIE FROM ANTWERP

On September 9th another sortie was attempted. The German troops had decreased in numbers, for IXth Reserve had been summoned to the south to join the newly constituted VIIth Army at St. Quentin, and every available reinforcement had been hurried south to strengthen the regiments. The consequence was that the Germans had to retire. But most of IXth Reserve were still available and some of XVth Corps. Line-of-communication troops were swept up and brought to the danger point; the Belgians were first held and then counter-attacked, and finally by September 14th they were all back again behind the forts of Antwerp. But their action had undoubtedly been of value, and might have had a very important effect had there only been just a little more power behind the blows of the Allies. That power could only be furnished by Great Britain. Only a very little more at this time would have made all the difference. So far the only direct aid given to Belgium by Britain had been the occupation of Ostend on August 28th by three battalions of Marines.

THIRD SORTIE FROM ANTWERP

Again on September 25th an attempt to break out was made. This time, very wisely, no great effort was made

to break the German right, but an attempt was made to reach the Termonde-Alost road.

By this time all IXth Reserve Corps had gone off to the south, but other troops, notably a marine division, had come up. The German left flank guard consisted of the 37th Landwehr Brigade, and it happened that it was marching on this very day to occupy Termonde, with a view to completing the investment from the south. These troops put up a fine fight though nearly surrounded by two divisions and the cavalry. They fell back on Alost. This very day had also been selected by von Bessler to open the main attack on the fortress. In the evening the Belgian troops in front of Malines (Mechlin) on the line of the Duffel River were attacked in far superior strength and driven in. The sortie on the right had to be recalled.

The actual numbers of the attackers and defenders of Antwerp were about equal, but the Germans deployed an enormous superiority of artillery. Nevertheless the place might have been held if only support had been available in the south. Such support could not be sent by sea direct without violating the neutrality of Holland. It had to come from Ostend, Dunkirk, or Boulogne. The only Power able to send support was Britain, and in the British councils there was a division of opinion as it would seem. The action taken was, consequently, futile. Some 8,000 men or so of the newly formed, and of course untrained, naval division were sent to Antwerp. These troops were not marines trained as soldiers, but a quite newly raised force, formed from the surplus of requirements of the R.N., R.N. Reserve, R.N. Volunteer Reserve, and newly-enlisted volunteers. They were badly equipped and had no artillery. Mr. Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, proceeded himself to Antwerp—a curious impulsive action. Nevertheless Mr. Churchill showed a better appreciation of the necessities of the case than did some of the Government, but he employed the force at his disposal in the wrong way. It was now too late at the end of September to save

Antwerp ; a withdrawal was essential. If the naval division had gone to Ghent it would have been of some real value to the Belgians.

ANTWERP ABANDONED

On the night of October 6th-7th the Belgian Army commenced its withdrawal from Antwerp, and on the night of 8th-9th the last troops, 2nd Belgian Division and part of the British naval division, fell back. The Belgians reassembled on the Ternuizen Canal. Unfortunately some of the naval division in their retreat passed the Dutch frontier, where they were disarmed and interned.

FRENCH AND BRITISH AT GHENT

We have stated that it was only from Britain that assistance could possibly come ; but as a matter of fact, after the British naval division, the next troops to arrive to assist the Belgians were a brigade of French " Fusiliers marins " under Admiral Ronarch, who reached Ghent on the 8th. On the 9th General Capper with part of the British 7th Division reached that point.

On October 8th the Germans forced the passage of the canal, and on the 9th they tried to envelop Ghent from the south, but the arrival of 7th British Division frustrated this attempt.

RETREAT TO THE YSER

King Albert had, however, decided to continue his retreat until he reached the support of his allies. That this decision was, in the circumstances, sound has never been questioned. Capper and Ronarch covered the retreat, Ronarch marching off at 7 p.m. on the 11th, Capper's 7th Division following a few hours later. The Belgians fell back towards the Yser River from Nieuport to Dixmude, under cover of

cavalry and strong rearguards. Ronarch fell back towards Dixmude and Capper towards Ypres. Capper reached a line Zandvoorde-Gheluvelt-Langemark on October 15th, his retirement having been leisurely. Capper's division formed part of a new British corps—the 4th—which at present only consisted of a weak cavalry division (the 3rd) under Byng, and 7th Division, the whole under command of Sir Henry Rawlinson.

It is now time to turn back and follow the events farther south, and after that to study the German movements, which, as we shall see, caused the inevitable retirement of the detachments on the left until they came into line with the main army. We may observe here, however, that the withdrawal of the Belgians, Ronarch, and Capper from the line of the Scheldt and Ternuizen Canal was not rapid or hurried. The Germans pressed them closely but not dangerously.

DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRY BETWEEN THE OISE AND THE YSER RIVERS

The country over which the fighting took place from the Battle of the Aisne onwards may be divided into three belts. North of the valley of the Oise an open region of chalk downs is reached. There is no marked ridge of ground, but the dividing line of watershed runs roughly from north of St. Quentin via Epehy-Bapaume-St. Pol to Boulogne. West of that line the streams run generally in a north-westerly direction, east of it in an easterly and north-easterly direction. The river lines do not offer good defensive lines for armies facing east or west. This chalk down country stretches as far north as the valley of the Sensée stream, and includes the old district of Picardy.

North of the Sensée valley an area of coal-mining and industrial districts is reached, densely populated, flat for the most part, and covered with mining villages. The southern portion of this area is Artois. North of this mining

area is the low-lying plain of Flanders traversed by innumerable canals and dykes.

Two slight ridges are of exceptional interest in Artois and in Flanders. Stretching out in a south-easterly direction from the chalk plateau round Boulogne is a scarp (*falaise*) of land which terminates north-east of Arras in spurs of some importance because of the fine view they offer over the level plain through which run the Scarpe and Sensée Rivers. These spurs became famous as Notre Dame de Lorette and the Vimy Ridge.

Rising from the Flanders plain is a semicircle of low heights elevated some 200 to 300 feet above the plain. This low ridge stretches in a semicircle east and south of Ypres. At the southern angle of this line of heights is Messines. Neuve Eglise farther west and Wytschacte, Hollebeke, Gheluvelt, Becelaire, the Polygon Wood, Paschendaele, Westroosebeke, Staden, northwards of Messines all stand on this well-marked ridge. The memories these names bring up shows at once of what importance was the elevation. Westwards the line of the ridge is prolonged by Mont Kemmel, Mont Rouge, Mont des Cats, and Cassel. Behind the ridge west of Staden lies the famous Forest of Houthulst. Northwards the point of the ridge nearly reaches to Dixmude on the Yser River, a small stream flowing through a low-lying belt of easily flooded land. The Yser River is joined to the Lys River about Menin by an important canal which passes Ypres.

THE MOVE OF THE BRITISH TO THE LEFT

The British cavalry was now organized in two divisions, one under Hubert Gough and the other for a time under Allenby, who was soon given command of the cavalry, as a corps, while de Lisle took command of the 1st Division. 6th Division had joined the army on the Aisne, completing thus the 3rd Corps under Pulteney. By the

night of October 2nd the 2nd Corps and 2nd Cavalry Division were clear of the front on the Aisne ready to move north. The cavalry marched, while infantry, artillery, and transport marched part of the way and trained part. The concentration area was north of Abbeville, and by October 9th these troops were moving forward to the line Bethune-Aire. It was fully time that they arrived, for the left of de Maudhuy's 10th Army was being pressed back. As the British came into line Conneau's cavalry corps passed over to their left. It was arranged that the dividing line between the armies was to be the Bethune-La Bassée Canal, but for the moment a brigade of 5th Division was south of the canal.

By the 10th the 1st Cavalry Division was also up. Working wide on the left the British cavalry corps cleared the area. It occupied the Forest of Nieppe and Mont des Cats on the 11th. On this day the 2nd Corps endeavoured to progress towards La Bassée, but without success. On the 12th the 3rd Corps, relieved on the Aisne by French troops, was detraining at Hazebrouck and on the 14th had reached the line Vieux Berquin-Neuve Eglise, after severe fighting. On their left the German cavalry had been driven back by the British cavalry, who occupied Wytschaete and Messines and pushed on towards the passages of the Lys. On the right of 3rd Corps Conneau's cavalry maintained liaison with the left of 2nd Corps. But on the 2nd Corps front no further progress had been made except on the extreme left. Indeed a German counter-stroke actually drove back the right of the corps a short way on October 13th.

On the 14th the cavalry of 4th Corps (3rd Cavalry Division under Byng) was in touch with Gough's 2nd Cavalry Division, and supported its attack on Wytschaete, so the whole line was formed from Belfort to the Yser.

On the 15th and 16th Pulteney's 3rd Corps was able to make further progress. The extreme left of 2nd Corps also made progress towards Aubers, but the right could only advance a very short way. The 3rd Cavalry Division had

now moved to the left of 7th Division in front of the Forest of Houthulst.

On the left of 4th Corps a mass of French cavalry and Belgian cavalry were operating in front of the Forest of Houthulst, but were being forced back about Staden. On October 19th the 1st Corps was detraining at Hazebrouck and the Indian Corps was commencing to arrive at St. Omer.

While these operations of the British Army were taking place, the French had been sending direct support to the Belgians. We have already seen that French cavalry connected 4th British Corps with the Belgians. This was 1st French Cavalry Corps, now commanded by de Mitry, who had replaced Sordet, plus an independent division with which the Belgian cavalry worked. Further, two divisions of Territorials were sent by sea to Dunkirk, and came into line between Ronarch's Marine Fusiliers and the 4th British Corps. The French troops on the left of 4th Corps were formed into an 8th Army under General d'Urbal.

In order to co-ordinate the work of the troops in the northern area Foch was brought from 9th Army, which was broken up now, and established himself at Doullens on October 5th. Sir John French worked in co-operation with him, but not under his orders, a difficult situation in which the French Generals showed on the whole infinite tact and patience. This very difficult position exacted more from the French commanders than from the British, but it is a tribute to both nations that friction was very rare. Indeed it is believed that except between Sarraill and Milne, in Salonica there never was any serious friction throughout the war, other than the difficulty between the two army headquarters in the spring of 1917 prior to the great French offensive which was such a dismal failure. This record is a remarkable one. In October and November 1914 there is no doubt that Foch rendered great service to the allied cause, not only by his direction of the French armies, and by the Staff arrangements made under his direction for the reinforcement of the British by French

troops, but above all by his confidence and strength of mind and purpose. There is little doubt that more than once Sir John French and some of his Staff nearly lost their nerve, but were steadied by the strength of character of the great Frenchman.

SITUATION ON OCTOBER 19TH

On October 19th, which may be described as the turning-point of the battle, the situation of the Allies was briefly as follows. From Arras to the La Bassée canal the French 6th Army was holding its ground with some difficulty, and the Germans had secured their position on the more important of the spurs about Vimy and Notre Dame de Lorette. From the La Bassée Canal west of La Bassée to in front of Neuve Eglise on a front of just under twenty miles stood 2nd and 3rd Corps with Conneau's 2nd Cavalry Corps holding the gap, about a mile or so long, between the corps. The length of the 2nd Corps line was about half that of 3rd Corps.

From Messines nearly to Hollebeke stood the cavalry corps, on a front of about four miles or a little more. It had failed to secure the passages of the Lys, and had been forced back to the Messines ridge. Along the continuation of the ridge which covers Ypres from the east stood the 4th Corps with 7th Division and on its left the 3rd Cavalry Division as far as near Langemark. The 4th Corps front was about twelve miles long. On the left of the 4th Corps were the French and Belgian cavalry and Territorials as far as Dixmude. On their left were the French Marines and the Belgians holding the line of the Yser to Nieuport. From the 14th to the 18th strong German attacks had forced the Belgians steadily back, and on the 19th an attempt by Rawlinson's 4th Corps to advance on Menin had been abandoned.

As available reserve stood 1st Corps now detraining about Hazebrouck, the Lahore Division of the Indian Corps now

detraining about St. Omer, two territorial battalions—the Hertfordshire and the London Scottish—and two yeomanry regiments. The British battalions were all under strength, the 2nd Corps, which had had a harder time than either of the other corps, being particularly weak. Some battalions did not muster more than 400 all told.

The offensive had not yet been abandoned. On October 21st the 1st Corps struck in on the left of 7th Division and made some progress, but its left was uncovered by the failure of the French Territorials. It was to save this situation that Bulfin's brigade made its memorable counter-attack. The 1st Corps movement soon came to a stop on the line Zonnebeke-Langemarck-Bixschoote. On the same day two battalions of the Lahore Division joined the cavalry, so the British Reserves were being rapidly depleted.

REINFORCEMENTS BROUGHT UP DURING THE BATTLE

But though the only further reinforcement of importance received by the British Army during the battle was the Meerut division of the Indian Corps, the French reinforcements began to pour in. On October 22nd the 42nd Division arrived, followed by, on October 25th, the 9th Cavalry Division, on October 26th the 9th Corps, on October 27th one division 16th Corps, on October 29th the rest of 16th Corps and the 38th Division, on November 3rd the 81st Territorial Division, and finally on November 9th the 20th Corps. These troops were all drawn from the line on the right and centre. 9th Corps came from the old 9th Army, 16th Corps and 20th Corps from old 2nd Army now part of 1st Army. 9th and 20th Corps had both served under Foch; the latter had, it will be recollected, distinguished itself on August 20th and the following days under his personal command in the battles of Morhange and the Gap of Charmes.

It is now time to consider what the Germans had been doing.

THE GERMAN MOVEMENTS

VIth Army had been rapidly reinforced until it brought both Castelnau's 2nd Army and de Maudhuy's 10th Army to a halt on a north and south line from about Noyon to La Bassée.

Certain changes of area were now made. IInd Army came out of the line, letting in VIIth Army. It then transferred to the right of Ist Army, taking over as far north as Bapaume. IVth Army Headquarters was taken out and its troops handed over to IIIrd and VIIth. So the German armies stood as follows: from Verdun to the Argonne Vth Army, across the Champagne country to Reims IIIrd Army, thence to Craonne VIIth Army, thence to Roye Ist Army, thence to Bapaume IInd Army, thence to La Bassée VIth Army. A mass of cavalry amounting to some seven divisions with a good deal of infantry support extended the line as far as Menin. A new IVth Army was in general reserve. On the left three groups under Strantz, Falkenhausen, and Gaede guarded Alsace and Lorraine. On the right von Bessler's IIIrd Reserve Corps with an attached Ersatz division and some Landwehr troops followed vigorously after the retreating Belgian, French, and British troops. It is not easy to discover just what were the total reinforcements received by the German Army up to October 10th. XVIIth Reserve Corps and XVth Reserve Corps seem to have come up. A division of marines had been engaged at Antwerp. A good many Ersatz and Landwehr formations, formed principally from garrison troops, had joined the three left detachments, which were denuded of first-line troops. XVth Reserve Corps and XVIIth Reserve Corps were employed on the left; they were formed of Ersatz and Landwehr troops (see Appendix III).

So far as the reinforcement of the right was concerned we find the XIVth Active Corps commencing to arrive in the La Bassée area on October 8th, reinforcing the Ist Bavarian. Units of the XIXth and VIIIth Corps came in very soon after

and joined the cavalry. It was these reinforcements that enabled the German right to hold out against the British. Reinforced by the Guard Cavalry Division the XIVth Corps succeeded in checking and driving back for a short distance the right of 5th Division 2nd Corps on October 13th, as we have seen.

XIXth Corps had come up in front of Lille on the 11th. The situation on the right was desperate, so the corps was ordered to carry the place by *coup de main*, which it accomplished in spite of the plucky defence of the little garrison. The corps then hurried off towards the Lys. It arrived on October 15th in time to prevent Allenby from getting across the Lys, after his victory over the German cavalry at Messines on the 13th. The VIIth Corps followed the XIXth, thus making the line of VIth Army secure.

As we have stated, IVth German Army was in general reserve. It was concentrating in Belgium. This new army was formed under the old IVth Army command, and consisted of IIIrd Reserve Corps, XXIIInd, XXIIIrd, XXIVth, and XXVIIth Reserve Corps, and VIth Bavarian Reserve Division.

It is a popular belief in Britain that all the German troops were conscripts. As a matter of fact, although the bulk of the youth of the country was called to the colours on the outbreak of war, there was so much enthusiasm in Germany that a large number of volunteers were available. From these six new corps were formed. Five came to the western front (XXIVth went to Metz) and one, XXVth, went to the east, where it did fine work. Four of the corps of volunteers were destined to take part in one of the bloodiest and most dreadful fights that have ever taken place, that along the Yser and in front of Ypres. It was upon this reserve that the Germans staked their last hope of victory on the western front in 1914.

On October 13th the new corps were disembarking in Belgium, and on the 14th the leading troops were hurrying west. IIIrd Reserve Corps, the marine division, and some

Landwehr and Ersatz brigades formed the advanced guard of this imposing army. It was on the 19th that the new troops began to make their presence felt. It is now abundantly evident that Sir Henry Rawlinson was more than justified in declining to commit his weak force to an attack on Menin on that day.

On this day, then, between La Bassée and the sea the Germans stood in considerable superiority of numbers to the Allies. They were supported by an overwhelming preponderance of medium artillery and machine guns. The only points of superiority of the Allies were their superior field guns (both the 18-pr. and the 75-mm. are better than the German 77-mm.) and the magnificent musketry of the British regulars, who still formed the great majority of the men in the ranks of the infantry regiments. To this we must add that there were French reinforcements soon available.

During the battle further reinforcements for the German right wing were brought up, consisting of IInd Bavarian Corps, XVth Corps, 26th Infantry Division, 6th Bavarian Reserve Division, 9th Reserve Division, 3rd and 25th Reserve Divisions, 4th Infantry Division, Winckler's composite division of the Guards, and one or two Landwehr brigades.

THE BATTLE OF THE YSER AND YPRES

It is not proposed to follow in detail the events of the great battle. On October 20th a great attack commenced on the Yser front. The attack was general all the way from Gheluvelt to the sea, but the fiercest onslaughts were delivered against the line from Dixmude to the sea by IIIrd Reserve Corps with its attached troops and the XXIIInd Reserve Corps. On October 27th the Belgians broke the dykes and flooded the country from near Dixmude to Nieuport. The floods were two or three miles wide, and completely stopped operations in that quarter. On this day the 9th French Corps came into line on the left of

1st British. With great dash this corps cleared its front, and occupied Paschendaele, while Haig, with his left secure, consolidated his position in the Polygon Wood. In the south the British were holding their own, though the right of 2nd Corps had to cede a little ground.

ASSAULT OF OCTOBER 30TH TO NOVEMBER 1ST—LOSS OF THE FLANDERS RIDGE BY THE BRITISH

As the attack of the volunteers was not having any success, a new plan was adopted. The reinforcements arriving were formed into a special storm group, under von Fabeck, consisting of two corps, two independent divisions, and four cavalry divisions. To this group were allotted a prodigious number of guns, 32 210-mm. howitzers, 240 150-mm. howitzers, and one battery of 305-mm. howitzers.

The great assault opened on October 30th. Von Fabeck's group attacked from south of the Menin road to the valley of the Douve brook, a tiny stream which, rising in the hollow at the foot of Mont Kemmel, flows between the Neuve Eglise and Messines spurs of the Flanders ridge south-eastwards to the Lys. North of the Menin road the XXVIIth and XXVIth Reserve Corps were to renew their attacks on the northern and eastern front of the Ypres salient as far as Dixmude. Von Fabeck's attack was delivered by five divisions in front line and struck the line held by the British cavalry and 1st and 7th Infantry Divisions. If we put the cavalry strength in the line as 3,000 rifles, and the strength of the average infantry battalion at 600 all told, that is at most 500 rifles each, we are overstating the available strength. The German battalions had just been brought up to strength by the receipt of drafts. If we state their available rifle strength at 800 rifles each we are not overstating the case. Thus Fabeck sent against far less than 15,000 British rifles a strength of close on 50,000. In reserve he had immediately available one more infantry

division and the available rifle strength of four cavalry divisions. His superiority in artillery was overwhelming, for to his mass of medium and heavy artillery the British could oppose the fire of only some four batteries of medium guns.

At the first rush Zandvoorde was captured and Byng's troopers were driven from Hollebeke to the canal. On the 31st the line of 1st Division gave, 7th Division was driven back. It seemed indeed as if the enemy was almost at the gates of Ypres. Lomax, the commander of 1st Division, was killed ; and Monro, commanding 2nd Division, wounded.

But then was seen with what a strength and majesty the British soldier fights. Suddenly and sternly recovering,¹ the survivors rallied on every hedgerow, every ditch or patch of trees or houses. Closely supported by the artillery, infantry and troopers closed with the bayonet on their terrible foes. The 2nd Division on the left sent its reserve battalion, the 2nd Worcesters, to support the 1st Division and attacked vigorously. Gheluvelt was retaken with the bayonet, 7th Division restored its line. On the cavalry front Wytschaete was cleared with the bayonet by the Northumberland and Lincolns of the 9th Brigade, lent by 2nd Corps, and the 16th Lancers, whose troopers, though in reserve, could not be restrained from accompanying their infantry comrades in the charge. Messines was lost, but with the help of the Inniskilling Fusiliers and the 57th Sikhs from the Indian Corps and the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Yorkshire Light Infantry from 2nd Corps, and the London Scottish, the line was maintained close west of the town. On their right some of the 3rd Corps counter-attacked in the valley of the Douve.

Support was forthcoming. Five French battalions came in to reinforce the weakened centre on the canal opposite Hollebeke. Again on November 1st von Fabeck renewed his assaults, but again he failed. The line was maintained

¹ No apology is made for plagiarising Napier. Ypres was a soldiers' battle, like Albuera.

intact with the aid of the French battalions between 1st Corps and 2nd Cavalry Division. But now the cavalry line was on the point of being forced back on Mount Kemmel. The British troops had done all, and more than all, that men could do, but help was close at hand. During the day and on November 2nd the 16th French Corps and Conneau's cavalry, a mass of perhaps 20,000 rifles, relieved the 1st and 2nd Cavalry Divisions plus the two brigades, one from 3rd Corps, one from the Indian Corps which had been supporting them, mustering with the London Scottish a force of now not more than 2,500 rifles at most.* The Indian Corps relieved 2nd Corps in front of La Bassée, and two brigades of infantry, though very exhausted and of battalion strengths that did not muster on the average 400 all told, relieved the shattered 7th Division.

The great assault had failed, but the Germans made one more great effort.

SECOND GREAT ASSAULT ON NOVEMBER 11TH

More troops were brought up. Von Linsingen, one of the hardest-fighting generals of the army, was placed in charge of a special group. Von Fabeck's group, slightly altered in composition, fought south of him. The main weight of von Linsingen's blow fell on the troops of 1st Division astride the Menin Road. Here fought Winckler's composite division of the Prussian Guard. Altogether some thirteen divisions, some of which, however, were badly battle-worn, attacked on the front from Messines to the Menin Road. Again, though the line was broken in places, the fight was restored at the point of the bayonet. The left of 16th French Corps lost some ground. Wytschaete was finally lost, but integrally the position was maintained.

Thus ended the German effort to crush France in one campaign. The "frisch und fröhlich" campaign no longer looked so alluring in the blood and mud and filth of the trenches in Flanders. Already the pressure of events in the east was calling troops from the west. Von Linsingen's IIInd Corps

had gone, von Fabeck's XIIIth Corps had gone, as had von Gerok's XXIVth.¹ IIIrd Reserve Corps and much cavalry were on the move. Had it not been for this the Germans might have tried again.

On the western front a siege now commenced which lasted for nearly four years. In it all the old-time devices of trench warfare, the mortar, the bomb, the hand grenade, liquid fire, the mine, and the counter-mine, were employed, and other weapons which the ingenuity of that truly ferocious animal "Man" was able to devise to destroy his enemies.

Again we have to ask ourselves why did the Germans fail. The answer is to be found in part in the magnificent fighting qualities of the old British Army, and particularly in the extremely thorough pre-war training of the infantry in defensive tactics. But to this we may fairly add that the German tactics of attack were not sound. An attack is a methodical progression from point to point. Each point gained must be securely held and used as a jumping-off place, or support, for the next advance. It follows that for a rapid attack waves of men must be used. That is to say, the attack must be organized in depth. Both in Fabeck's and in Linsingen's assaults the whole weight went in at once in an endeavour to break through. But the stubborn defenders took severe toll of the attackers, who became disorganized, failed to secure themselves, and were driven out from the captured positions. The procedure was not methodical.

It is quite true that the result of these great efforts was to put in German hands almost the whole of the Flanders ridge from Messines northwards, a priceless tactical asset for the defence of their siege line. But their strategic objective was to break the allied line and reach the Channel ports. In this they failed.

¹ These three commanders with their corps staffs were used in command of composite formations, not of their own corps, in the Battle of Ypres.

CHAPTER XI

THE EASTERN FRONT

German IXth Army formed to help Austria—Central Powers' counter-stroke—Russian retreat—Siege of Przemyśl raised—First attack on Warsaw—Russian counter-stroke—Central Powers retreat—Russian arrangements for advance—German arrangements for counter-stroke—Battles of Łódź, Cracow, Limanowa—Reinforcements arrive from the west—German advance in Poland—Germans support Austrians in the Carpathians—Russian attempt on East Prussia—The winter battle in the Masurian Lakes—The line stabilizes.

It will be remembered that after the destruction of the Russian 2nd Army under Samsonov at Tannenberg in August, Hindenburg, reinforced by two corps from the western front, turned on Russian 1st Army under Rennenkampf. Rennenkampf retired across the frontier towards the Niemen. Meanwhile in Galicia the Russian 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 8th Armies had defeated the Austrians, who had retired towards Cracow and had not halted until they were behind the Dunajec River. 3rd Army laid siege to Przemyśl and 4th, 5th, and 8th Armies followed up the retreating Austrians. 3rd Army was now placed under Dimitriev. Russki, the victor of Lemberg, was called to Warsaw to take command of the new armies concentrating in that area. 2nd Army was reformed about Pultusk, north of Warsaw. On the left bank of the Vistula large bodies of cavalry supported by rifle brigades protected the right of 4th Army, covered the Polish plain, and threatened the line of the Warta River. On the left of 8th Army Cossacks and infantry detachments under command of Brussilov attacked the Carpathian passes, which were held only by Landsturm troops. By October 5th

most of these passes were in Russian hands, and a detachment had reached Marmaros Sziget, via the Jablonitzza pass.

In the middle of September, "for political reasons," the whole German plan of campaign was scrapped. Hindenburg was ordered to detach all but two corps from VIIIth Army and transfer them to Silesia. A day or two later he was ordered to take command of this new IXth Army himself, retaining general control of the VIIIth Army now reduced to two corps and a cavalry division.

VIIIth GERMAN ARMY OBLIGED TO FALL BACK

As soon as the troops for IXth Army were drawn off, the pressure on Rennenkampf, who now had five army corps and certainly five cavalry divisions at his disposal, relaxed. The VIIIth Army was pressed and forced to fall back, which it did with much success. It was this withdrawal which was claimed at the time by the Russians as a great victory. They said they had lured the Germans into the wilds of Augustovo, and there defeated them. We now see how shallow was this claim.

THE CONCENTRATION AND DEPLOYMENT OF IXth GERMAN ARMY AND THE AUSTRIANS

Hindenburg concentrated IXth Army about Czentochau. So speedy were the German movements and so perfect their staff work, that although on September 15th most of the troops composing this army were following up Rennenkampf in the wilds of East Prussia, on September 26th the army stood deployed and ready to advance east of Czentochau. IXth Army consisted of XIth, XVIIth, XXth and Guard Reserve Corps and Woyrsch's Landwehr Corps reinforced by Landwehr from Silesia and from Posen. A IIIrd Cavalry Corps was formed under Frommel. XVIIth and XXth Corps had not fully completed concentration.

The Austrian troops were now reorganized. Archduke

Joseph had replaced Auffenberg in command of IVth Army. The armies stood from left to right, Ist under Dankl astride the Vistula along the Nida and Dunajec, then IVth along the Dunajec astride the Cracow-Jaroslav railway, then IIIrd under Boreovic on the Biala, and then IIInd under Boehm-Ermolli on the Carpathians across the Dukla pass. In the Hungarian plain and on the Carpathians the detachments had been reinforced by various formations, including a Polish legion under Pilsudski. These detachments were formed into two groups under Hoffman and Pflanzer-Bultin.

CENTRAL POWERS ADVANCE—RUSSIANS FALL BACK

The general advance was timed for September 27th. IXth German Army, moving with three corps in front line, cavalry corps on the left, and two corps (XXth and XVIIth) in reserve, had, as we have seen, nothing much in front of them. By October 1st the line of the Kamienna was passed and by October 4th Radom was reached. At this point the Germans met the first serious opposition. Astride of and south of the Vistula, the Austrians found the Russian resistance not serious. On October 4th the bridgehead at Sandomierz was captured, and on the 7th the San had been reached. Hindenburg had reached the line of the great fortress bridgehead of Ivangorod. On the 9th, after a last desperate effort to storm the Przemysl forts, Dimitriev raised the siege and together with Ivanov fell back through Jaroslav to the line of the San. In the south the Russians withdrew speedily across the Carpathian passes. Such was the effect of a timely blow struck in the right direction and in sufficient strength.

FURTHER OPERATIONS

But the Central Powers were now in a quandary. In East Prussia the weak VIIIth Army was falling back under pressure from superior numbers. Ere long still greater

numbers might be moving against this exposed detachment. The left wing of IXth Army was completely in the air. The Russian masses had not been drawn into battle. Something had to be done. The decision made was to "pursue" the "defeated" enemy. The Austrians were to press across the San and attack up the right bank of the Vistula. Hindenburg was to prolong his front and strike at Warsaw. Thus it was hoped to envelop the Russian masses about Ivangorod. In fact it was a plan to break the Russian centre and destroy one wing of the army.

Hindenburg ordered Frommel's Cavalry to turn north, and into the gap thus made he brought the XXth and XVIIth Corps. At the same time he ordered von François with the VIIIth Army to attack to draw off troops from Warsaw.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF WARSAW

The advance on Warsaw commenced on October 9th. The Germans reached the outer works, but the opposition gradually stiffened. The Austrians on the San made very little progress. Dankl and Hindenburg's right in front of Ivangorod made no progress at all.

On October 19th the Russians struck back on both wings. On October 20th, Hindenburg, realizing that he was completely outflanked, ordered a withdrawal of his left to the Rawka, and on the 21st he fell back to the Pilica. It is certain that this skilful and well-conducted retreat saved the Germans from a serious disaster. Dankl's troops fought well in front of Ivangorod. But south of the Vistula the IVth Austrian Army on the San was defeated and IIIrd and IInd Armies were repulsed and had to withdraw.

There was nothing for it but to retreat in order to escape. The German troops fell back in good order, destroying all bridges and delaying the enemy in every way. But the Austrians, especially Ist and IVth Armies, became very much disorganized, and fell back to the shelter of Cracow. The line taken up was farther west than before the advance.

It lay along the Carpathians as far as the Raba River, thence along the Raba to Cracow-Pilica-Czentochau—along the line of the Warta to Kolo-Thorn—along the line of the frontier to the Masurian Lakes—the line of the Angerapp.

REINFORCEMENT OF VIIITH ARMY

In the north VIIIth Army had been saved from defeat by the arrival on October 12th of XXVth Reserve Corps, one of the six volunteer corps, four of which had gone to the Yser and Ypres front and one to Metz.

We must now turn to see how the Grand Duke Nicolas had brought about this sudden reversal of fortune.

THE RUSSIAN MOVEMENTS

As we have seen, 2nd Army was reorganizing north of Warsaw. A 9th Army was being formed south of Warsaw and a 10th Army at Novo Georgevski.

When Hindenburg's advance took place the Grand Duke withdrew 4th Army from south of the Vistula to Ivangorod. This explains why IVth Austrian Army was able to make rapid progress. It was obviously impossible to remain even on the Wisloka when Hindenburg was on the Kamienna, so the whole line in Galicia was brought back. As soon as it was clear that Hindenburg's left was in the air, 5th Army was brought away from the south and concentrated at Warsaw, so that at or about Warsaw stood 2nd, 5th, and 10th Armies with a mass of Cossacks under Novikov.

9th and 4th Armies secured the line of the Vistula above and below Ivangorod. 3rd and 8th Armies were now grouped under command of Ivanov, while Brussilov took over 8th Army command. These sufficed to guard against the Austrians.

When Hindenburg launched his attack on Warsaw the Russians must indeed have rejoiced. But so vigorous was his blow that troops of 10th and 5th Army had to be hurried

out to meet it. However, the force available for the counter-stroke against the Germans was prodigious. Eighteen Army corps each of three divisions were opposed to five German and three Austrian Corps between Warsaw and Ivangorod. The superiority in cavalry was even more marked. Hindenburg evaded the blow by using to the uttermost the wonderful mobility of the German troops. We must observe at this point that the German and Austrian cavalry proved superior to the Russian.

THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE

After the Germans and Austrians fell back the Russians prepared ponderously and slowly to follow. 10th Army command under Schilinski took over the task of Rennenkampf in East Prussia. It seems to have now consisted of three corps. Its duty was to guard the right. The main mass of the Russian armies stood apparently as follows: 1st Army (Rennenkampf), four corps, was astride the Vistula towards Plock. 2nd Army (Scheidemann), four corps, 5th Army (Plehve), four corps, 4th Army (Everth), three corps, 9th Army, four corps, were deployed on the line Lowicz-Lodz-Kielce. The task of these five armies was to follow up the Germans and Austrians to the line Cracow-Thorn. On the left the group under Ivanov, consisting of 3rd Army (Dimitriev) four corps and 8th Army (Brussilov) four corps, covered the siege of Przemyśl. 11th Army of one corps and a number of special troops besieged Przemyśl. On the southern, outer, flank were numerous Cossacks and other formations under Alexiev.

In reserve at Warsaw there were about four army corps. The total strength of the Russian armies at this date was apparently about 120 infantry and 40 cavalry divisions. The Germans and Austrians had opposed to them at this time about 70 infantry and 18 cavalry divisions, of which 18 infantry and 4 cavalry divisions were German.

THE GERMAN COUNTER-PLANS

Hindenburg and Ludendorf were determined that the only way to check the advance of the vast mass opposed to them was to recapture the initiative by a bold and resolute offensive. Nor could they wait until reinforcements arrived from the west.

Hindenburg had now been definitely placed in command of the whole eastern German front. IXth Army was assigned to Mackensen.

His new plan was undoubtedly a fine conception. In their rapid withdrawal the Germans had thoroughly demolished the roads and railways. Counting on the delay thus caused to the Russians, as on their well-known slowness and lack of mobility in advance, Hindenburg proposed to concentrate a striking force between the Warta and Vistula to attack the Russian right wing. If he could drive part of this wing northwards over the Vistula and separate it from the rest of the army he might reasonably hope to end the campaign with a victory.

Accordingly Mackensen concentrated between the Warta and Vistula along the frontier the three active corps from IXth and two from VIIIth Army. He was ready to move on November 7th. This was a remarkable operation. On October 28th three of these corps were fighting on the Rawka and three days later they had been withdrawn to Czen-tochau, railed round to their new area and deployed.

The movement left a gap in the line between the left of the two remaining corps of what had been IXth Army and the Warta. This was filled temporarily with a mass of cavalry. But arrangements were made for IInd Austrian Army to disengage and come round via Cracow to fill this gap about Kalisch.

The Russians were ready and began their ponderous progress beyond the line Plock-Lodz-Kielce on November 10th, so when Mackensen moved he found the Russians on the move.

THE BATTLE OF LODZ

It is impossible to detail here the events of this most remarkable battle. Mackensen's advance struck the junction between 1st and 2nd Russian Armies. The left of 1st Russian Army, south of the Vistula, was defeated and fell back. The right corps of 2nd Russian Army was broken, and its whole line forced back. Mackensen then endeavoured to surround 2nd Russian Army in Lodz. XXVth Corps, supported by a cavalry division and a division of Guard Reserve Corps, succeeded in getting right round Lodz from the north, via Brzenny. On the south progress was made by the Germans against the left of 2nd Army and the right of 5th Army, but the Russian line, though bent, did not break, so a complete encirclement of 2nd Russian Army was not achieved.

1st Army had reinforced its left corps south of the Vistula, but this left had been driven back. The right corps (the 2nd Corps) of the 2nd Army had been routed. Hence the gap into which XXVth moved. The left corps of 5th Army (the 5th), followed in succession by 19th and 5th Siberian Corps, hurried to the scene. The 6th Corps of the 1st Army and reinforcements from Warsaw pushed up the railway via Skierniewicz. In spite of the efforts of the Posen Landwehr brought up on the right of Mackensen, to break the right of 5th Russian Army the 2nd Army in Lodz was not surrounded, while XXVth German Corps with the 3rd Guard Infantry Division, encumbered with prisoners and captured guns, found themselves in their turn surrounded. On November 21st Brzenny was recaptured by the Russians and XXVth Corps was cut off.

There followed one of the finest feats of arms of the war. Fortunately for the Germans the Russian units which had trapped them in rear at Brzenny and along the railway were reinforcements hurried to the scene and not properly organized. On the night of the 22nd the 3rd Guard Infantry

Division in two columns broke across the railway line and regained Brzenny. One column was led by the divisional commander sword in hand. Next day, the 24th, the XXVth Corps also got clear, and on the 25th fell back to shelter of the XXth Corps. It brought off all prisoners and captured guns and all its own guns. Fortunately for the Germans hard frost set in on November 22nd, making movement across country possible.

THE BATTLE OF CRACOW

While Mackensen's Army was attacking in the north the IVth, Ist, and IInd Austrian Armies with Woyrsch's Corps had advanced to the attack of the 4th and 9th Russian Armies in front of Cracow and Czentochau. The IInd Austrian Army was to turn the right of 4th Russian Army at Novo Radomski. Meanwhile the right wing of IVth Army reinforced by the garrison of Cracow was to endeavour to turn the left of the 9th Russian Army. But the Austrian forces were neither well enough led nor sufficient in numbers to carry out this rôle. 4th Russian Army was not outflanked, and the right of IVth Austrian Army was itself in danger of being turned. By November 30th the whole eastern front of the Central Powers was thrown on to the defensive.

RUSSIAN COUNTER-ATTACK

The Russians were not minded to let Mackensen escape too easily. The main blows were struck at Mackensen's flanks. His Ist Reserve Corps, on the Vistula, was hard put to it to stand against the attacks of the Russian Ist Army, but reinforcements from Ist Corps in East Prussia and from IIIrd Reserve Corps straight from the mud of the Yser reached it in time. The line was held. The Russians then struck vigorously at first one wing and then another of the Austrian IInd Army, which, as we saw, had come up

to fill the gap in the line guarded only by the two corps of Landwehr and the cavalry. Though Boehm-Ermolli's troops were nearly overwhelmed, the Germans came to their support and saved them. It was the troops arriving from the west which were hurried into the fight as they arrived, parts of XIIIth and IInd Corps and half of XXIVth Reserve Corps.

Mackensen also had received reinforcements. Early in December he smote the Russians hard south of Lodz, and forced them to withdraw, following up this blow with a tremendous thrust at Lowicz on December 7th, which drove back the Russian right. Lodz was abandoned on December 5th. The Russians fell back all along the line to the Nida, the Pilica, and the Bzura Rivers.

THE BATTLE OF LIMANOVA

The Battle of Cracow and the march of IInd Austrian Army to the north, had left IIIrd Austrian Army, lying on the upper Dunajec covering the important railway junction at Neu Sandez, somewhat isolated. Ivanov saw an opportunity for inflicting a serious defeat on this army and thus turning the whole Austrian right south of Cracow. The forces connecting IIIrd Army to IVth Army were weak. Still weaker were the detachments on the Carpathians connecting to Hoffman's corps.

The operations which now took place are known to the Germans as the Battle of Limanova.

The Russians endeavoured to break through between Cracow and the upper Dunajec and cut the railway at or about Limanova. 3rd Russian Army was astride the Vistula at this time, but 9th and 11th Corps were available for an attack and about November 28th were driving in the weak forces on the right of IIIrd Austrian Army. A success at this point might have had the effect of driving IIIrd Austrian Army back into Cracow and completely exposing the right wing of the Central Powers.

XIVth Austrian Corps and a division of XXIVth German Reserve Corps were hurried up by rail towards Limanova and struck in straight from the trucks towards Neu Sandez. 8th Russian Army was also advancing, and its force struck the right of the German troops as they endeavoured to debouch across the Stradomka River, a tributary of the Dunajee. The weather was very bad. The winter was early, there was a good deal of snow, and the roads were slippery with ice.

The rest of IVth Austrian Army moving east from Cracow struck at the now weakened right of 3rd Russian Army, which gradually withdrew.

There followed a somewhat confused fight in which the factor of time was all-important. If Brussilov and the left of 3rd Russian Army could be delayed long enough to allow further reinforcements to arrive on the Austrian right the situation could be saved. There seems to be but little doubt that this time was gained by the splendid fight put up by the "Volunteers" of the division of XXIVth German Reserve Corps. To right and left the Austrians gave way. Assailed from east and north by 9th Russian Corps, and from south-east by one of Brussilov's corps, an infantry preponderance of about six to one, they yet stood firm, and that too without much artillery support. Reinforcements for the Austrians forced Dimitriev to fall back to save his right wing about December 14th.

Meanwhile Alexiev in the south had forced back Pflanzer Bultin's troops now known as Vth Army and reinforced from the Serbian front. German reinforcements therefore relieved IIInd Army, which was moved round to its old position on the right of IIIrd Austrian Army.

FURTHER FIGHTING IN POLAND

After Lowicz Mackensen employed his troops on the first of the series of trench-warfare attacks which became the rule in the Great War. Using his artillery superiority to

pound the enemy's trenches to pieces, he slowly forced the Russian line back, hardly using his infantry at all. All through December this operation continued, until all the passages of the Rawka, Pilica, Bzura, and Nida were in German and Austrian hands. There he stopped for the winter, having gained a sound strategical jumping-off place for operations in the spring.

FIGHTING ON THE CARPATHIANS—FORMATION OF GERMAN SOUTHERN (OR XITH) ARMY

The Austrian line could not be left where it was, with the Russians in possession of the strategically important Carpathian passes. So Hindenburg again came to his allies' aid. A southern German army which was a composite of German and Austrian troops was formed under von Linsingen and placed between IInd and Vth Austrian Armies. IInd Austrian Army was stiffened by the inclusion of German units.

Vth Austrian Army opened the attack and succeeded in reoccupying the Jablonitza, entering the Bukovina and reaching the Dniester. It was, however, driven back across the Pruth. Von Linsingen attacked the 8th Russian Army, and forced it back, but the IIIrd and IInd Austrian Armies gave very little assistance. The weather was very bad and the winter exceptionally cold. Finally the line remained, broadly speaking, along the crest of the Carpathians as far as the Pantyr pass, thence to Kolomea, and along the Pruth to the Rumanian frontier. The area between the Pruth and the Dniester seems to have been "No man's land." The siege of Przemyśl was not raised.

The Dukla pass and Lipkov pass remained in Russian hands; thence the line ran by Gorlice along the Biala and Dunajec, along the Nida, then along a part of the Pilica to Skierniewiez (in German hands), along the Bzura, thence along the Vistula to Plock.

THE WINTER BATTLE IN THE MASURIAN LAKES

On the northern flank Plehve seems to have replaced Rennenkampf in general command. 1st Russian Army still stood astride of the Vistula, but a new force 12th (?) Army was formed near Lomza to co-operate with 10th Army against East Prussia. The border from the Masurian Lakes was still only held by frontier guards. When Plehve's advance became marked about the middle of January these troops were strengthened. The Russian offensive in this quarter soon came to a halt, chiefly on account of the weather.

But the stern old East Prussian who commanded the German forces in the east was not the man to allow the weather to prevent him from destroying an enemy. 10th Russian Army still lay along the Angerapp with its left on the Masurian Lakes not far from Johannisburg. It was isolated. If its right were broken and the railway and road to Kovno reached, its position would be desperate. Besides, the cold weather always makes the Russian curl up, for he is half an Asiatic. He longs for shelter and warmth.

At the end of January Hindenburg received as further reinforcements three corps of new formation, XXXVIIIth, XXXIXth, and XLth. He brought XXIst Corps up from IXth Army.

VIIIth Army, which consisted of the Ist Corps and two Landwehr divisions, besides garrison troops and the Ist Cavalry Division, was entrenched all the way from the Memel River to Lötzen.

Hindenburg brought up XLth Corps behind its right and formed a new Xth Army with XXIst, XXXVIIIth, and XXXIXth behind the line of 1st Cavalry Division, which was holding the left.

He ordered the VIIIth Army to attack all along its front on February 7th, using its heavy guns to the utmost. On the 8th, when the Russian attention was drawn to the VIIIth Army, the new Xth Army attacked. The troops

marched knee-deep in snow, but this seems to have checked their wonderful mobility but little. The Russians were broken up. Isolated fragments were surrounded at various points, the largest body being surrounded by VIIIth Army at Augustovo on February 16th, and the remnant at Ljubino on the 22nd. The 10th Russian Army had virtually ceased to exist.

Such was the effect of misleading and surprising an enemy.

THE LINE STABILIZES

Hindenburg tried to make a further move forward to the line of the Niemen between Kovno and Grodno, but Russian reinforcements checked the advance and finally forced the Germans to withdraw to Suvalki.

During the winter, then, the line north of the Vistula ran in Russian territory almost straight from Plock to Augustovo, thence due north to in front of Eydtkunnen, with cavalry on the Niemen (or Memel) watching Kovno.

FALL OF PRZEMYSL

On March 22nd Przemyśl fell, releasing the 11th Russian Army for work elsewhere.

As we asked ourselves why the Germans failed in the west, so now we may well ask ourselves why the Russians failed. The answer is to be found rather in the superior mobility of the Germans and their far superior leadership than in any other cause. It is true that the German troops showed themselves better fighters than the Russians. But this alone would not account for the German successes against—on the whole theatre—far superior numbers. The Central Powers were weighted with two difficulties. They had a divided command which afflicted the allies in the west, and they had a very poor army in that of Austria.

It was the Germans who bore the brunt of the heaviest

fighting and who gained all the successes that were gained on the eastern front. At the decisive point they were able to collect on every occasion a superiority or at any rate an equality of numbers and a far superior artillery, except on October 20th at Warsaw. This was due above all things to their superior mobility. At Tannenberg, at Lodz, at Lowicz, in the Masurian Lakes, the decisive point was chosen by the Germans, which shows that they had the initiative. This initiative they gained almost entirely by their superior mobility.

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CHAPTER XII

TURKEY

ON October 30th Turkey finally threw in her lot with the Central Powers and declared war. The army of Turkey consisted, in peace, of fourteen army corps, but these corps were loosely organized. German officers had been employed for some years, and particularly after the severe defeat of Turkey in her war with the Balkan States, in organizing the Turkish Army.

THE TURKISH CONCENTRATION

On and before the declaration of war Turkey began to concentrate her armies in three directions. The principal concentration was against the Russian Caucasus Armies. Here IXth, Xth, and XIth Corps with half of XIIIth and two divisions of Ist Corps were concentrated. The second concentration of importance was at Damascus and in Palestine, here VIIIth, XIIth, part at any rate of IVth, and part of Vth were collected. These two armies were destined the one to attack the Russians, the other to attack Egypt. The defence of Bagdad and the area southwards was left to half of XIIIth, reinforced, apparently, by part of XIVth Corps, and probably part of IVth Corps. The remainder of the Turkish troops were maintained in garrisons, because Turkey had to protect her extensive seaboard against British sea-power, and because the political organization of her territory was so bad, and the population so disaffected, that garrisons were necessary to maintain order and check rebellion. IIInd, IIIrd, and one division of Ist Corps re-

maintained at Constantinople, Vth, VIth, VIIth watched the seaboard and guarded Asia Minor.

OPERATIONS IN THE PERSIAN GULF

The first operation of war took place in the Persian Gulf, where, for naval and commercial reasons, the British were determined to maintain a firm position. It was also desired to protect the pipe line of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. For this purpose a division from India under General Barrett was detailed. The leading echelon—the Poona Brigade—four battalions and a Mountain Battery, occupied Sanijeh. There was a little fighting on the outposts on November 11th. On November 13th the rest of the division was arriving. On the 15th Sâhain was occupied after a sharp fight. On November 17th a considerable action took place at Sahil in which the Turks were routed, and on November 22nd the British occupied Basra. On December 4th a reconnaissance pushed up towards Kurna and found it strongly held. Kurna was surrounded by skilful operations and surrendered with its garrison on December 9th.

In north-west Persia Turkish irregulars occupied Tabriz, but on January 30th these were cleared out by the Russians.

OPERATIONS IN ARMENIA—DEFEAT OF THE TURKS

The main geographical features of the peculiar mountainous area which divides the Black from the Caspian Sea, and walls the plains of Russia on the south, are on the north running almost east and west from sea to sea, the Caucasus main chain. Then a remarkable narrow valley in which lies Tiflis. Through this valley runs from Batum and Poti on the Black to Baku on the Caspian Sea a railway with a branch running south from Tiflis to Kars and Erivan. South of the Tiflis valley is the mass of mountains which have their centre in Mount Ararat, and are the culminating point of the mighty mountain masses which

spread east and west along the southern shores of the Caspian and the Black Seas. South of Mount Ararat is Van, on Lake Van. From its south-western slopes flow the headwaters of the Euphrates. Radiating from Ararat run out great chains of mountains which are known by various names, the two main chains being the Taurus, which bound the upper valley of the Euphrates on the west, and farther west the Anti-Taurus. Just across the border from Kars lies the Turkish fortress of Erzerum. Both of these places are in Armenia, which the old Russo-Turkish frontier cut in half. On the road between Kars and Erzerum is Sarikamish.

The Russian army under Wronzov was the first to move. It consisted of four corps. Early in November it commenced its difficult movement from Kars and Erivan towards Erzerum. To reach Erzerum it was necessary to cross the divide between the headwaters of the Arras River and those of the Euphrates, at the extreme head of which in a fertile valley stands Erzerum.

On examining the map it will be seen that the head valley of the Choruk (or Joruk) River, which flows into the sea near Batum, having flowed from west to east behind the mountains of Trebizond, forms an approach to the Russian right rear. A force advancing up it would threaten Kars and the Russian communications with that place. One cannot but think that the German advisers of Enver Pasha, who was in control of the Turkish Army, jumped to the conclusion that this route must be, and could be, used to bring off the favourite German device of envelopment. Two divisions of Ist Corps, the best in the Turkish Army, were shipped from Constantinople to Trebizond to carry out this operation. Not content with this, XIth Corps was detailed to hold the Russian advance on the main road while IXth and Xth moved over the main chain of the mountains to envelop the Russian wing.

Now there is only one road in the whole country. The road from Kars to Erzerum via Sarikamish, the country

is rocky and mountainous, with mountains that tower far into the snowline even in the hot summer. Appalling blizzards sweep through the desolate valleys in the winter. In winter too the country is deep in snow. Thus the task set the Turkish troops was far harder than that which Hindenburg set to the East Prussian VIIIth and Xth Armies in February, or than the task which baffled the Austrians and von Linsingen in the Carpathians in January.

Wronzov was not surprised. He held the interior lines, and in addition to that he held the only road. He concentrated against each corps in turn ; and though the Turks fought as well as the Russians, or better, each corps in turn was overwhelmed and destroyed.

XIth commenced its move on December 17th. The Russian advanced troops were slowly pushed back. IXth and Xth actually crossed the mountains, and reached Sarikamish. Ist never got over the appalling pass at the head of the Joruk Valley. On December 28th Wronzov struck the Xth Corps, and pushed it back. This left IXth Corps alone, and too utterly exhausted to move. It was surrounded at Sarikamish, and surrendered *en masse*. Ist simply disappeared. The men died of exhaustion and hunger on the road ; hardly any got back. XIth gallantly sacrificed itself to save Xth, but only suffered severe losses itself. Xth was almost annihilated in its exhausting repassage of the mountain passes.

THE ADVANCE AGAINST EGYPT. THE TURKISH FAILURE

During November Djemal Pasha with the Damascus troops concentrated south of Palestine and prepared for an attack on Egypt. He may have been able to collect as many as 60,000 men for this purpose. By November 21st Bedouin auxiliaries were already skirmishing with Camel Corps posts at Katiyeh on the Egyptian side of the Sinai desert. Sir John Maxwell, who commanded in Egypt, could dispose of an enormous superiority of force to anything the Turks

could bring. There were the regular Egyptian Army, Territorials, a Yeomanry brigade, Indian and Australian troops, concentrating in Egypt, and so forth. But he had no organization available to go forth and do battle with Djemal in the desert or on the other side of it. Wisely he decided to let the Turks come on. Very slowly the Turks brought up troops. Early in February about 12,000 seem to have been collected in the neighbourhood of Katiyeh. On February 2nd a futile attempt was made by the Turks to cross the canal. It was of course easily repulsed. Why the Turks were allowed quietly to withdraw as they did is not quite clear.

The entry of Turkey into the war had thus brought for the present only one advantage to the Central Powers. It had definitely closed the Dardanelles, and with it the route to Russia. Thus the only way in which the Western Allies could bring succour and support to Russia was via Archangel or via Vladivostok. This was of great importance, and in fact dominated the allied strategy during 1915.

The operations of the Turkish armies had been futile. The conception of the plan of campaign in the Caucasus showed a lack of the most elementary military intelligence. The mere attempt to march troops over roadless tracks in deep snow, without adequate arrangements, foredoomed the plan to failure. Even a Napoleon could not have brought such a plan to fruition, and Enver Pasha was certainly no Napoleon. To give rein to the imagination in military problems is, even more than in those of everyday life, an unwise proceeding. It is easy to do so. To build "castles in Spain" on foundations which look secure if they are not very carefully examined is quite easy. Military operations are a very practical affair. Operations of war to be successful must be not only feasible, but simple. If they involve insuperable difficulties such as calling on troops to do without food and shelter in a blizzard, or without water in a desert, they will inevitably fail. The Turkish

operations failed, not because their strategy was bad in itself, nor because their tactics and fighting value were low—it was not—but because the military knowledge of their chiefs was not thorough. Their plans were “amateurish.”

Many amateurs can make good sound military plans. As a matter of fact nothing is easier than to turn your enemy's flank or break its front—on paper. Any fool can do it. Most of the pretty plans made by amateurs during a war would certainly bring the war to an early and successful conclusion—if they came off. It is just this knowledge that distinguishes the real soldier from the amateur. *This is what trained staffs are kept and paid for. This is why it is essential for a military adviser to have actual personal knowledge of troops and troop leading. Only thus can he distinguish between the plan that is good on paper and that which is good in reality. Even then he may make a mistake; Staff officers being human must be forgiven for occasional mistakes. During the whole course of the war with Turkey both sides showed examples of imagination allowed to run riot. Sometimes really highly trained soldiers let this happen to them with disastrous results.

CHAPTER XIII

SECOND AND THIRD AUSTRIAN INVASIONS OF SERBIA

As we saw in Chapter VII, the advance of Russki, Ivanov, and Brussilov, against East Galicia in August obliged the Austrian command to call off Boehm-Ermolli's IInd Army from Serbia, where on August 20th the Austrians had been defeated and driven in rout across the frontier rivers.

SERBS ENTER BOSNIA AND WITHDRAW

The Serbs did not at first follow up their victory across the frontier; it was not till September 7th that a Serbian Army commenced an invasion of Bosnia. The idea doubtless was to try to reach Sarajevo and raise a rebellion among the Serb kinsfolk in Southern Austria. The expedition was a failure, and soon fell back on the news that the Austrians had again crossed the Drina.

SECOND INVASION OF SERBIA

The Austrian General Potiorek collected for the second invasion of Serbia the following troops: XVth and XVIth Corps, and a composite corps of which the XIIIth Corps formed the nucleus. The Drina was crossed and the Yadar valley gained.

There was confused fighting in the hills. On September 18th, after less than a week's fighting, the Austrians retired in some disorder over the Drina. The casualties on both sides had been heavy.

THIRD INVASION OF SERBIA

Throughout October the Austrian command was busy organizing new forces and reorganizing old ones.

The Austrians seem to have collected the VIIIth Corps (two divisions) and a division IXth Corps, part of XIIIth Corps apparently about three brigades, the XVth and XVIth Corps complete, the 40th and 42nd Honved Divisions, which seem to have formed an XVIIIth Corps, and some other second-line (Landwehr and Honved) troops from XIVth Corps district (the Tyrol) and from VIIth Corps district. The total numbers have been given as 260 battalions of infantry, which may be about correct.

The Serbs had reorganized themselves, and fortunately a supply of ammunition reached them just in time.¹

The Austrian plan was the old, old plan of invasion by large numbers of columns. The left moved from Semendria up the Morava valley; the centre, which included the main strength, moved up the Kolubara, and again a wide enveloping move was attempted via Ushitze to the upper waters of the Serbian Morava.

The movement commenced on November 10th. The Serbs fell back to their mountains. It was December 1st before a further move took place. The Austrian centre, breaking into two columns, moved up the Lig Valley and the upper Kolubara. By the 3rd the Austrians were established on the western slopes of Mount Radnik.

The aged King Peter, who was present with his troops, issued a wonderful appeal, and in the afternoon Putnik launched his men to the counter-stroke.

The Austrian left central column was utterly routed. This caused the whole centre and left to fall back. On the Serbian left near Ushitze the XVth and XVIth Austrian

¹ It is not often realized in the West how hard put to it Serbia was to obtain ammunition, arms, and clothing. Greece was allied to Serbia, but treacherously refused her aid.

Corps were defeated, and driven back in rout across the Drina. On the 15th Belgrade was retaken.

So ended the third Austrian invasion of Serbia, and yet another triumph of the skilful use of the defensive on natural features while a strong reserve is available to take advantage of any mistakes made by the enemy.

The Austrian strategy was thoroughly unsound, their leadership from top to bottom was feeble. There is no need to go farther to find a cause for their disastrous defeat.

CHAPTER XIV

FURTHER OPERATIONS IN THE WEST

THE FRENCH ATTACK IN THE CHAMPAGNE •

AFTER the German failure at Ypres the removal eastwards of several corps from the western front left the Germans too weak to make any further effort against the allied line. The initiative had passed to the Allies. It was "up to them" to make the next move. Two plans of offensive action were proposed. Sir John French wished to attack north-eastwards to clear the Belgian coast. Joffre wished to attack in the Champagne country in order to clear the enemy from French territory with a subsidiary attack about Arras to gain important tactical features.

The necessity to take the offensive in some direction lay in the need of Russia. It was of great importance to the Allies to prevent further transfers from west to east, where the Russian masses were, it was hoped, about to gain an important success.

The 8th Division had now arrived as a reinforcement for the British, thus completing the 4th Corps. A 5th Corps (27th and 28th Divisions) was soon to follow. A Territorial battalion had been attached to every brigade in the original force, and considerable reinforcements of men and officers—not all of very good quality and training, however—had been received by the infantry. It must be admitted by all who knew the army in those days that the quality of the troops was not very good. The infantry of the old regular army had quite literally ceased to exist. The commands and Staffs were feeling the reaction from the terrible strain

of the first four months of war. 1st Corps had been relieved by 20th French Corps, and was in reserve, as was the cavalry, but Flanders is an unpropitious country for winter campaigning.

However, although the co-operation of the Navy was promised, the decision of Joffre prevailed. The main offensive operation was to be made in the Champagne, east of Reims. Subsidiary operations were to take place all along the front, and particularly near Arras.

As in this work all tactical details have been passed over, the details of the operations which now took place will not be discussed. Locally operations by the French took the form of fighting for points of tactical importance. An operation to be carried out by 16th French Corps in which the British were to assist came to nothing. In Champagne some six French divisions with a very powerful artillery assailed the front held by part of IIIrd German Army. Some initial success was gained. The Germans were forced to reinforce their line, but in general the attack failed. On the Aisne the French had a set-back. In February all along the line major operations ceased.

It had now become manifest to all that adequate artillery was not yet in the possession of the Allies, or for that matter of the Germans, to admit of successful operations against the trench lines, which daily became stronger. The supply of ammunition was short, at least as much so on the German as on the allied side.

New factors were arising, an entirely new set of strategic conditions had to be confronted with the entry of Turkey into the war. In Great Britain vast new armies were springing up, so too in Germany and in Austria new formations were being raised and trained. Some sort of breathing space was necessary to both sides. During this time the trench lines in the west became ever stronger and stronger.

CHAPTER XV

OBSERVATIONS

THE second series of operations on the western front are not of the same military interest as the first series up to the Battle of the Marne. The forces on the whole theatre of operations being about equal, both sides manœuvred to form reserves and employ them on the exposed wing of the enemy. Neither side can be said to have held the interior lines, so the rate of transference to the north was merely a question of mobility and Staff work. In this the Germans and the French were equally efficient. The operations bear a certain similarity to the manœuvre for Lee's southern flank by Grant in 1864. Lee held the interior lines, but Grant could supply by sea and so form new bases quickly, neutralizing in this way Lee's advantage. On the other hand, in 1864 Lee was definitely on the defensive, while Grant was attacking. In 1914, on the other hand, both Joffre and the Germans were intent on attacking.

The arrival of the four "Volunteer" corps temporarily gave the Germans a superiority of force on the northern flank, but these "Volunteers" do not seem to have had the same dash that characterized the British Territorial and New Army divisions when they were put into the line. One does not like to appear to say anything even remotely savouring of boastfulness, but it does seem the fact that the British proved themselves a more warlike race in battle than the Germans, though we may freely admit that the military qualities of endurance of discomfort, of hardship, and of iron discipline, were conspicuous on the German side.

The second Austrian invasion of Serbia was met and defeated in a very similar way to that in which the first was met. The attempted attack on the 6th Russian Army in the Caucasus was also another perfect example of the weakness of the theory of encirclement when used in the wrong way. This foolish obsession which undoubtedly filled the minds of the German leaders throughout the war was certainly strengthened by the victories of Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes.

On the other hand, the operations in the eastern theatre of war, which have been only very briefly sketched, contain many features of general and of strategical interest.

In Diagram I is shown the situation in mid September. In the north the Prussians were victorious, in the south the Austrians were defeated.

So serious was the Austrian defeat that direct support had to be accorded by Germany to Austria. Obviously, indirect support by an attack on Warsaw from the north would have been more effective if the Austrian Army could have been depended on at all. But if the Russian pursuit succeeded in completely destroying all cohesion in the Austrian Army, the direct defence of German territory was vital. The steadfastness and courage of the German command in the face of this situation has not been realized in Britain and France.

In Diagram II is shown the counter-stroke, the swift movement of the bulk of VIIIth German Army to the south followed by the advance on Ivangorod. Just as when *Rennenkampf* fell back towards the *Niemen* after *Tannenberg* the Russians claimed to have "lured" *Hindenburg* on, so now the Russians claimed to have fallen back in order to "lure" the Germans and Austrians on to near the fortified line of the *Vistula*. The plain fact is that the Russian command was surprised by the German thrust. The first thought was to collect troops to meet this dreaded enemy, so 4th Russian Army was hurriedly sent for to come to *Ivangorod*. The line of the *Vistula* between that place and

Warsaw must be held at all costs. The further arrival of two corps (Hindenburg's Reserve) on Hindenburg's left, and their rapid attack on Warsaw, seems again to have surprised the Russians, but the great masses of Russians available at Warsaw and Novo Georgevski were well placed for a blow at Hindenburg's flank. It is possible that the move of the 5th Army to Warsaw was made in anticipation of making a flank attack. We may well ask ourselves why Hindenburg and Ludendorf attempted this rush on Warsaw at all. The only explanation seems to be that they found themselves in a difficulty. The original plan had been to attack the line of the Vistula from north and from south. Now, in spite of all their plans, they found themselves face to face with it. Had the surprise been sufficiently complete the superior fighting qualities of the German troops might have carried them through. It was a gamble for a big stake. But the cards were against them. They had played their best trump and it had been over-trumped. Very wisely they cut their loss and withdrew.

But the German generals were not disposed to give up their hopes of victory. Using their superior mobility, they moved their main weight to between the Warta and the Vistula as shown in Diagram III. Their new blow struck, as they expected, a weak spot, but their strength was unequal to bringing off a complete victory.

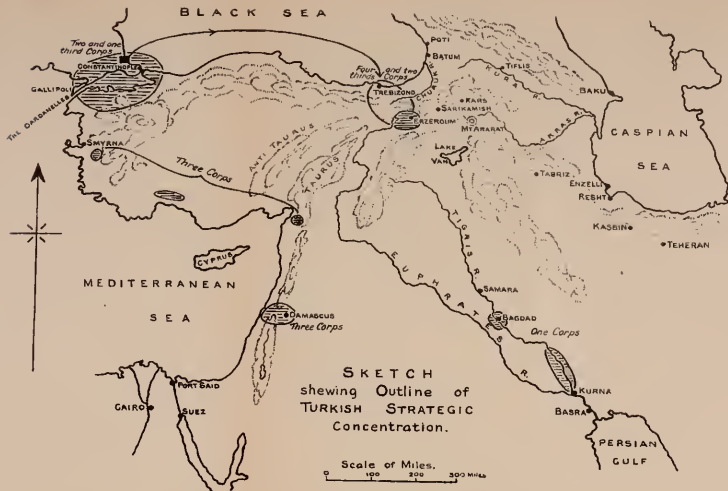
The remaining actions, the battles of Cracow, of Limanova, of the Masurian Lakes, and the German advance to the Bzura, are all subsidiary, as also was the fighting in the Carpathians.

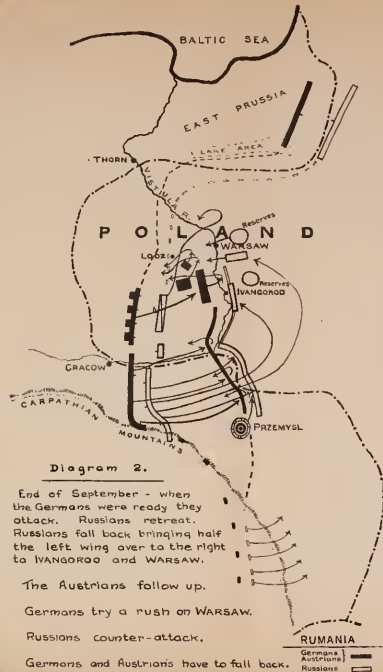
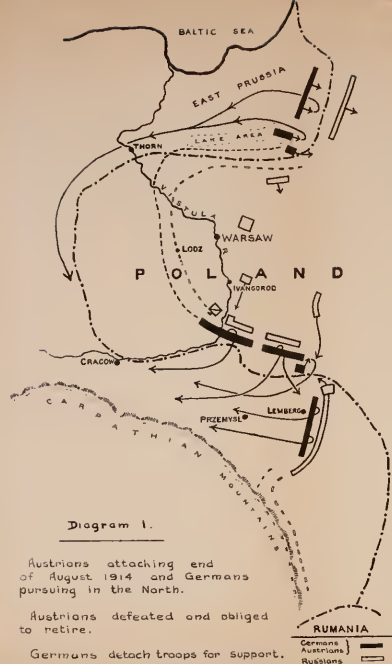
To what are we to attribute the general failure of the Russians? Certainly not to bad strategy. Their plan to crush Austria was within sight of success again and again. The explanation is to be found partly in the superior tactical value of the Germans, due to superior leadership, superior armament, superior training, and superior *moral*; but above all in the superior mobility of the Germans which allowed them to utilize weak forces, again and again making up for



the Corps







lack of numbers by moving their troops swiftly from point to point like Napoleon in 1814 and Lee in all his campaigns in Virginia. Thus they were superior at the decisive point in most of their actions, superior in numbers as well as in *moral*, armament, and training, even though very inferior numerically on the whole theatre of operations.

CHAPTER XVI

SOME REFLEXIONS

It should now be quite clear that the popular belief that the Germans were in very superior numbers on the western front in 1914 has no foundation in fact. In fact, the Central Powers were outnumbered everywhere. They struck Belgium in overwhelming strength. They struck the two allied armies on the left (British and 5th French) on August 23rd in very superior strength, actually in round numbers twelve corps to eight (about). But on the rest of the French line they were actually in inferior numbers.

Their initial success was due to superior *moral*, leadership, armament, and peace-training far more than to their strategy. They had beaten the French armies all the way from the Vosges to the Ardennes with actually inferior forces. Their first set-back came when they met the British Army, not at all perturbed about their superiority, and not at all afraid of them.

By August 26th they had already lost the greater part of the advantage they had gained by "cheating" at the game of war, if we may so call their invasion of Belgium.

By August 29th the pendulum had swung the other way. The strategical situation definitely favoured the French. But it was not only the strategical situation which had changed. The great change which took place between August 19th and August 29th was that the French Army found itself. The French are the premier military nation of Europe. In those ten days they shook off their fear of Germany, their splendid soldiers learnt the game of war, for it is innate in the French to be good soldiers. From

that period Germany never had a chance. When the French recovered their old military superiority over the Germans, that was the end of a German chance of victory. The fight of the British at Mons and Le Cateau just gave the French the necessary breathing space. It was enough.

But the strength of the defensive in modern war is so great that superiority of numbers is essential where superiority in fighting power is not marked on either side, as it was not in the west from August 29th, 1914, onwards.

Could such superiority of numbers have been found by either side in 1914? Certainly Germany could not, for the defeat of her ally, Austria, actually drew off troops from the principal theatre of operations. France could not, for all, even partially organized forces, were employed. Could Britain have found the troops?

This is a question about which opinions will and always must differ. In the circumstances that arose probably Britain could not do so. But if one asks Could the circumstances have been changed? then the answer is, Yes; Britain could have done so.

Lord Kitchener's first act on taking over the War Office was to commence the recruitment of a New Army. The War Office personnel had migrated to France. A new Staff had to be created. The current of its energy was turned into the channel of the formation of the New Army, and the bringing back to Britain of all available Regulars. The crucial question is, Was this sound, or would it have been better to have adopted the organization ready to hand—the Territorials—and turned all energy into making two lines of Territorials, one available for active, the other for home service? If this had been done it is impossible to believe that great reinforcements could not have been sent to Belgium in September 1914. The policy of bringing home Regular units from India and sending Territorial units there was of very doubtful value. Drafts of recruits could have been sent to the Regulars in India and drafts of trained officers and N.C.O.s brought back to stiffen the Territorial cadres. Was

there prejudice against the Territorials? It is almost impossible to deny that there was. Second-line troops are generally not mobile, they are usually sticky in attack. That is true. The Territorial Artillery was armed with the 15-pr. B.L.C. ; not a good gun, but as good as the German 77-mm. They would not have been asked to take part in an attack until they had learnt war in the best of schools, active service. To say that they could not have stood in the line is absurd.

But would they have been allowed to go abroad anyhow? Would the Government, afraid of an invasion, have allowed it? To judge by Lord Kitchener's letters published in his *Life* one must suppose that they would not.

It is all a difficult problem which at present we have not sufficient data on which to judge. All we can definitely say is that had the British been able to put eight divisions into Flanders in September and early October 1914, instead of only one, the Allies would have ended the campaign on the Scheldt certainly, on the Dender very likely, on the Meuse possibly. Think what this would have meant for the Allies, all the industrial area of France saved. Such would have been the reward reaped had the Allies been able to concentrate superior forces at the decisive point.

With all due deference to the mass of popular opinion—and prejudice—which is against the theory here produced, the preparations for war, even on land, made by Great Britain before 1914 were adequate, had her forces been properly employed.

There is also another angle at which it may be permitted to look at the generally accepted theory, that Germany's invasion of Belgium gave her a great strategic advantage over France in August 1914. It is contended here that the exact reverse is the case, and that had the French strategy been sound, the German plan, quite literally, delivered her into the hands of France. Supposing that the French, instead of rushing madly to the attack without any strategic reserve or any clear idea of their objective, had remained

on the defensive, and fallen back steadily, pivoting on Verdun, while the British Army concentrated at Lille and the French strategic reserves in the area Amiens-Arras-St. Quentin, ready to operate, towards east, north east, or north, as might be required. What chance would the widely extended German lines have had of snatching a victory? We presuppose that the French had had—which they did not have—good peace-training in the tactics of the defence. Yet even so no one can fail to appreciate how strong the French were on the defensive, even at the beginning of the war. The failure of VIIth, VIth, and Vth Armies, the slow advance of IVth and IIIrd, all testify to this. The war would have been over very much sooner, and we should never have had cause to bemoan the inadequacy of our preparations, but for the faulty strategy of the French at the opening of the campaign. Even as it was it was a very near thing. We have already discussed the question of the situation on August 28th, when Sir John French refused to commit his troops to battle in support of 5th French Army. We have seen how near the Germans were to defeat at the Chemin des Dames on September 13th. We have seen how weak was the connexion between the right of VIth Army near Lille and IIIrd Reserve Corps early in October, before the four new corps came up.

On the eastern front, as on the western, the German strategy was at fault. They counted on the slowness of Russian mobilization, and they were wrong. But on this front too they proved that vigorous leadership, perfect training and organization, and grand fighting qualities go far to make up for all deficiencies. But whereas in the west the original faulty strategy and failure in battle of the French were soon atoned for by good strategy and splendid fighting, in the east the superiority of the Germans over the Russians was retained. Here numbers were all against the Germans. Here the failure of their Austrian allies vitiated all their efforts.

If, then, as we contend, the Germans ought to have been

defeated in 1914 on both fronts, how was it that they were able to make so fine a fight as they did for four long years? The answer is that initial failures are irremediable. The failure of the Allies in the west at the very commencement gave the Germans a position of superiority which even the defeats of the Marne and of Ypres did not wrest from them. They were doomed to ultimate defeat, but they had drawn their lines of defence so strongly that they could impose a long delay upon their adversaries. They had gained time. Time is all in favour of the defensive. Something may turn up. Time was given to the Germans to utilize their vast resources to the full. The unexpected "something may turn up" did turn up. Russia collapsed. Britain wasted her efforts on the Dardanelles. The Allies made many mistakes in the years to come. The Germans did not make military mistakes. They did make one great mistake: they forced the United States into war against them by their reckless disregard of public morals. Had it not been for this, who can doubt that ultimately Germany would have won through, not to complete victory, but beyond utter disaster?

The truth is that the war was an insane gamble on the part of Germany, brought on by the senseless megalomania which clouded the minds of her people from Kaiser to gutter-snipe. Had the Allies played their hand right at the beginning, the war would not have lasted four years, nor three, nor even two. Germany put up a gigantic bluff, and by that means won a big stake, the opening stake, but in the farther progress of the great game the weight told. Her bluff failed to be regarded, her hand was called and it was too weak.

A reader may ask why it is that not a word has been said in this book about actual battle casualties. The reason is that strategically speaking throughout 1914 they were not a matter of importance. It was not till the siege war began, when the question of endurance was paramount as in all sieges, that casualties became of the first strategic importance.

APPENDIX I

A COMPARISON OF DATES OF IMPORTANCE

- July 27. War declared on Serbia by Austria.
July 28. Austrians bombard Belgrade.
July 29. General outbreak of war certain.
Aug. 2. German troops enter Russia and France.
Aug. 4. Germans invade Belgium and attack Liège.
Aug. 5. French invade Alsace.
Russians enter East Prussia.
Aug. 12. General advance of southern French armies commenced.
Austrians invade Serbia.
Aug. 17. Deployment of German western army on the line Liège-Thionville completed.
Aug. 18. German advance in west commenced.
Germans retire in East Prussia.
Austrian advance between Bug and Vistula commenced.
Russian southern army commences advance towards Lemberg.
Austrians utterly defeated by Serbs.
Aug. 19-23. French defeated all along the line in Battle of the Frontiers.
Belgians retire to Antwerp.
British Army comes into line. Battle of Mons.
German retreat stayed in East Prussia; measures taken for a counter-stroke.
Austrian left wing advances slowly with heavy fighting on the Tanev and about Krasnik.
Aug. 24-28. French and British retreat in west. Left wing escapes.
Belgians attempt a sortie which fails.
German advance on Gap of Charmes checked.

- GERMANS SEND TWO CORPS FROM WEST TO EAST.
 Russian 2nd Army destroyed at Tannenberg.
 Austrian advance checked except in Bug valley.
 Austrian defensive wing in Galicia driven back on Lemberg.
- Aug. 29-
 Sept. 4. German advance checked at Battle of St. Quentin-Guise.
 French retreat continued steadily.
- Sept. 5-9. Austrians defeated in Galicia and lose Lemberg.
 Battle of the Marne. Germans fall back.
 Germans defeated before Nancy.
 Belgians attempt another sortie, which checks dispatch of German troops southwards.
 Russians forced to abandon East Prussia.
 Austrian attempted counter-stroke against southern Russian army fails.
 Serbs invade Bosnia.
- Sept. 10-20. Germans retire to the Aisne. Battle of the Aisne.
 Allies checked.
 Battle of Verdun. Germans checked.
 Austrians retreat to the Dunajec.
 Russians besiege Przemysl.
 Germans send troops to Czentochoau to support Austrians.
 Serbs withdraw from Bosnia.
 Austrians invade Serbia, but are obliged to withdraw.
- Sept. 21-30. French and Germans manoeuvre for northern wing.
 Line stabilized on front Noyon-Arras.
 Germans advance on Ivangorod. Russians retreat and raise siege of Przemysl.
 British naval division sent to Antwerp.
- Oct. 1-19. Germans bring up four and a half new corps to Flanders.
 British Army transferred to Flanders.
 French and British send forces to Ghent to assist withdrawal of Belgians from Antwerp.
 Antwerp abandoned. Belgians with French and British supports retire on the line of the Yser and the Flanders ridge east of Ypres.

British advance in Flanders checked.

Line stabilizes on the front Arras-Armentières-Ypres.

In east Hindenburg attempts a rush on Warsaw. Great Russian counter-stroke. Austrians and Germans obliged to withdraw on Cracow and the Warta River. Russians advance in East Prussia.

Oct. 20- Great German attacks between Armentières and
Nov. 11. the sea are checked.

Hindenburg concentrates an army between the Warta and Vistula.

Russians advance. Hindenburg counter-attacks. Russians forced back to Lodz, are checked at Cracow and obliged to retreat.

Turkey enters the war on the side of the Central Powers.

British occupy Basra.

Nov. 12- Line in the west stabilized.

Germans withdraw troops from west to east.

Feb. 15. French attack in Champagne to check this movement; attack fails.

Line stabilized on eastern front in Russian territory as far as Cracow, thence along the Carpathians. Russian 10th Army destroyed at Augustovo.

Turks defeated in the Caucasus and on the Suez Canal.

APPENDIX II

APPROXIMATE STRENGTH IN RIFLES AND GUNS OF AN INFANTRY DIVISION AND AN ARMY CORPS OF THE VARIOUS BELLIGERENTS AT THE BEGIN- NING OF THE WAR

—	Division.		Army Corps.			
	Rifles.	Guns.	Division.	Corps Cavalry.	Corps Guns.	—
Germany	12,000	72	Two	One or two regiments	16	A German division was very strong in special troops such as pioneers. Each German army had one or more regi- ments of heavy howitzers.
Austria	13,000— 15,000	36	Three (one of Land- wehr)	One brigade	16 to 24	
France	12,000	48	Two plus a reserve brigade of 4,000 rifles	One or two regiments	36 to 48	Each army had from 12 to 24 heavy guns.
Britain	12,000	72	Two	Nil (at first)	Nil	
Russia	16,000 (Siberian Corps, 12,000)	48	Three (one of reserve)	One division	Nil	Each army had from 12 to 24 heavy guns.

APPENDIX III

NOTE ON TROOPS PUT IN THE FIELD BY GERMANY FROM AUGUST 1914 TO FEBRUARY 1915

On mobilization active corps were :

Guard.

Ist to XXIst Prussian and Saxon.

Ist to IIIrd Bavarian.

Reserve corps were formed as follows :

Guard Reserve by Guard Corps.

Ist Reserve Corps by Ist and XVIIth Active.

IIIrd	„	„	„	IIIrd Active Corps.
IVth	„	„	„	IVth and XIth Active Corps.
Vth	„	„	„	Vth Active Corps.
VIth	„	„	„	VIth Active Corps.
VIIth	„	„	„	VIIth Active Corps.
VIIIth	„	„	„	VIIIth Active Corps.
IXth	„	„	„	IXth Active Corps.
Xth	„	„	„	Xth and Guard Active Corps.
XIIth	„	„	„	XIIth and XIXth Active Corps (Saxons).

XIVth Reserve Corps „ XIIIth and XIVth Active Corps.

XVIIIth „ „ „ XVIIIth Active Corps.

Ist Bavarian Reserve Corps by Ist and IIIrd Bavarian.

There were also 3rd Reserve Division and 33rd Reserve Division, formed by IInd Active and XVIth Active Corps.

From the so-called Ersatz troops were formed at first a regiment per army corps area. Each army corps area formed also several Landwehr brigades. These were brigades of all arms.

Each of the eight armies into which the whole German Army was formed had several Landwehr brigades attached for

lines-of-communication work. These Landwehr formations were early employed in front-line work. Thus on August 23rd 53rd Reserve Division, formed in XVIth Corps area and placed at Metz in garrison, was used with five Landwehr brigades in groups forming the Corps "Oven" and the group "Franke."

In the same way in the east von Woyrsch commanded a corps called a Landwehr corps consisting of the 36th Reserve Division (XVIIth Corps area) and several Landwehr brigades.

Immediately the armies were mobilized the Ministry of War set to work to enlarge the army, and the following new corps were formed from newly raised regiments: XXIIInd, XXIIIrd, XXIVth, XXVth, XXVIth, XXVIIth Reserve Corps and the 6th Bavarian Reserve Division.

Also XVIIth Reserve Corps was formed from Ersatz and Landwehr troops.

As soon as these were dispatched to the front about October 1914, the following new corps were formed: XXXVIIIth, XXXIXth, XLth, XL1st, and 8th Bavarian Reserve Division.

XVth Reserve Corps was formed from Bavarian reserve troops.

To form these corps seventy-three new reserve infantry regiments and one hundred regiments called reserve infantry regiments were formed from Ersatz troops and Landwehr troops.

A few other infantry units were also formed, such as four regiments of Marines formed from the sailors, and ten battalions of Jägers.

Artillery and Engineers were formed in proportion to the infantry as required.

Note on the Meaning of "Ersatz" Troops.—The "Ersatz Reserve" consisted of the *sound* men not taken for service (the surplus sound men in fact).

On mobilization "Ersatz" units were formed by the surplus of the active cadres filled to strength with these "Ersatz" reservists.

Of course as the war went on Ersatz, Landwehr, Reserve, and Active units became indistinguishable from one another just as our Regular, New Army, and Territorials became indistinguishable.

In the British Army the Scottish infantry were the fortunate possessors of a distinctive uniform, and so got back to or joined their own regiments, if not their own battalions. The unfor-

fortunate English (always the under-dog of the British Empire after having conquered the world) were pitchforked into any regiment, Durhams to West Kents, Yorks to Devons, and so on. This is what happened throughout the German armies. The feelings of cannon fodder cannot be considered too far.

APPENDIX III(A)

DETAIL OF ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION OF GERMAN ARMY

Commander-in-Chief, the Kaiser. Chief of Great General Staff, von Moltke.

Ist Army—von Kluck

IInd, IIIrd, IVth, IXth Active ; IIIrd Reserve Corps ; IInd Cavalry Corps (three divisions) ; one Landwehr brigade ; one Pioneer regiment.

IIInd Army—von Bülow

VIIth, Xth, Guard Active ; VIIth, Xth, Guard Reserve Corps ; two Landwehr brigades ; two Pioneer regiments ; a siege train.

IIIrd Army—von Hausen (The Saxon Army)

XIth, XIIth (Saxon), XIXth (Saxon) Active, XIIth (Saxon) Reserve Corps ; Ist Cavalry Corps (two divisions) ; one Landwehr brigade ; one Pioneer regiment.

IVth Army—Duke Albrecht of Würtemberg

Vth, VIIIth, XVIIIth Active ; VIIIth, XVIIIth Reserve Corps ; one Cavalry division ; one Landwehr brigade ; one Pioneer regiment ; a small siege train.

Vth Army—The Crown Prince of Germany

Vth, XIIIth, XVIth Active ; Vth, VIth Reserve Corps ; one Cavalry division ; five Landwehr brigades ; two Pioneer regiments ; a small siege train.

Note.—VIth Active Corps was early transferred from IVth to Vth Army. 33rd Reserve Division was sent to Metz in garrison, and was at disposal of this army.

VIth Army—Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria

XXIst, Ist Bavarian, IInd Bavarian, IIIrd Bavarian Active ; Ist Bavarian Reserve Corps ; one Cavalry division ; two Landwehr brigades ; one Pioneer regiment.

VIIth Army—von Heeringen—plus detachments in Southern Alsace

XIVth, XVth Active ; XIVth Reserve Corps ; one Cavalry division ; four Landwehr brigades ; some Ersatz regiments.

VIIIth Army—von Prittwitz

Ist, XVIIth, XXth Active ; Ist Reserve Corps ; one Cavalry division ; 3rd Reserve Division ; three Landwehr brigades ; some Landwehr cavalry ; one Pioneer regiment.

Von Woyrsch's Corps

Five Landwehr brigades ; some Landwehr cavalry (some Ersatz troops were included in this formation).

In Posen there were collected some Landwehr brigades reinforced by Ersatz battalions, total apparently about four regiments.

APPENDIX IV

DETAIL OF ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION OF FRENCH ARMY

1st Army—Dubail

Two cavalry divisions ; 7th, 8th, 13th, 14th, 21st Corps. •

2nd Army—Castelnau

Two cavalry divisions ; 9th, 15th, 16th, 18th, 20th Corps ; one Colonial mixed brigade.

3rd Army—Ruffey

One Cavalry division ; 4th, 5th, 6th Corps ; one Colonial mixed brigade.

4th Army—de l'Angle de Cavy

One Cavalry division ; 12th, 17th, and Colonial Corps ; one Colonial mixed brigade.

5th Army—de Lanrezac

One Cavalry division ; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 10th, 11th Corps.
Sordet's Cavalry Corps (three divisions).

Watching Italy, three reserve divisions.

At Hirson, Valabrègue's three reserve divisions.

APPENDIX IV(A)

DETAIL OF DISTRIBUTION OF FRENCH ARMY ON AUGUST 20TH

Army of Alsace—Pau

One Cavalry division ; 7th Corps ; 58th, 66th Reserve Division ; 44th Infantry Division (19th Corps) ; five groups of Chasseurs Alpins.

1st Army

8th, 13th, 14th, 21st Corps ; several groups of Chasseurs Alpins ; 2nd Cavalry Corps—Conneau—two divisions.

2nd Army

One Cavalry division ; Half 9th Corps, 15th, 16th, 20th Corps ; one Colonial mixed brigade ; 63rd, 64th, 68th, 70th, 73rd, 74th Reserve Divisions.

N.B.—It is not clear what 73rd and 74th Reserve Divisions were. We can only state that they are reported as being at Toul. Perhaps they were formed from the reserve brigades which formed part of an army corps on mobilization but were not always with the corps, and from the surplus of the Colonial Army in France.

Army of Lorraine—Manoury

54th, 55th, 56th, 65th, 67th Reserve Divisions and also perhaps 75th Reserve Division from Verdun. See note above.

3rd Army

One Cavalry division ; 4th, 5th, 6th Army Corps ; one mixed brigade.

4th Army

One Cavalry division ; Colonial Corps ; 2nd, 11th, 12th, 17th Corps ; a 9th Corps formed from one division 9th Corps and the Moroccan Division ; one Colonial mixed brigade ; 52nd, 60th Reserve Divisions.

5th Army

Sordet's Cavalry Corps ; one Cavalry division ; 1st, 3rd, 10th, 18th Corps ; one division of 19th Corps ; 51st, 53rd, 57th, 69th Reserve Divisions.

D'Amade's Army

Three Territorial divisions ; 61st and 62nd Reserve Divisions.
It is not clear where 59th, 71st, and 72nd Reserve Divisions were.

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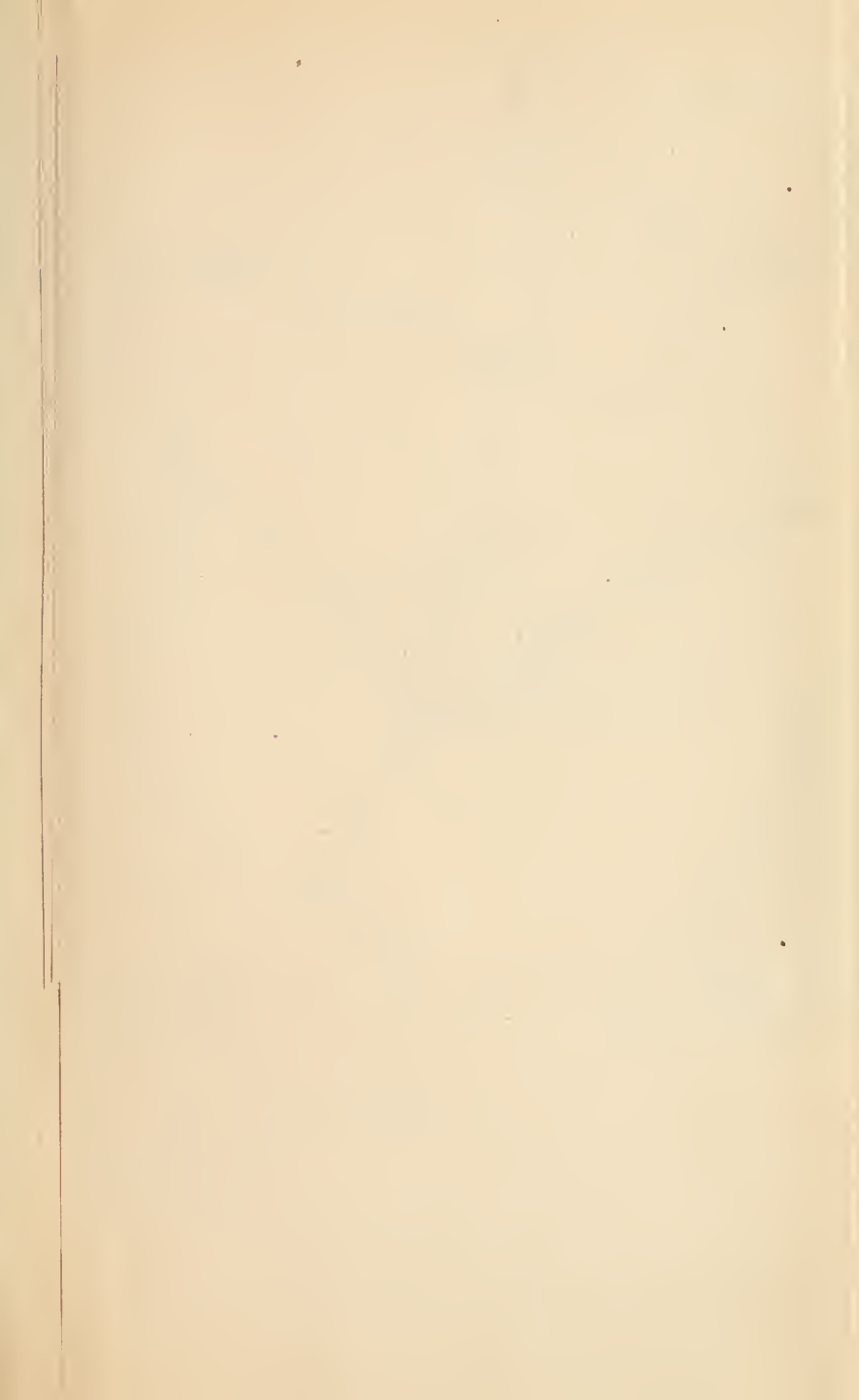


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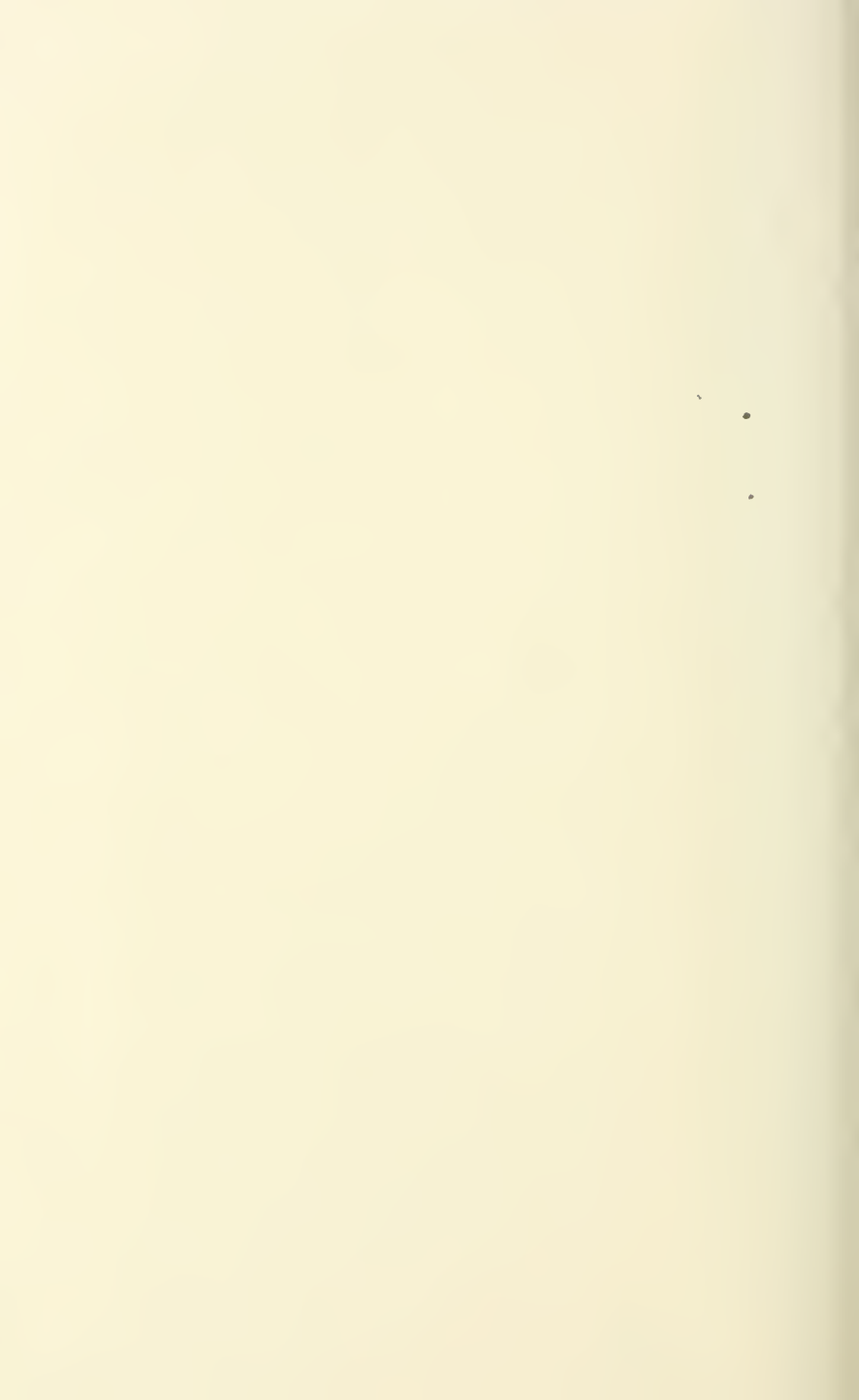


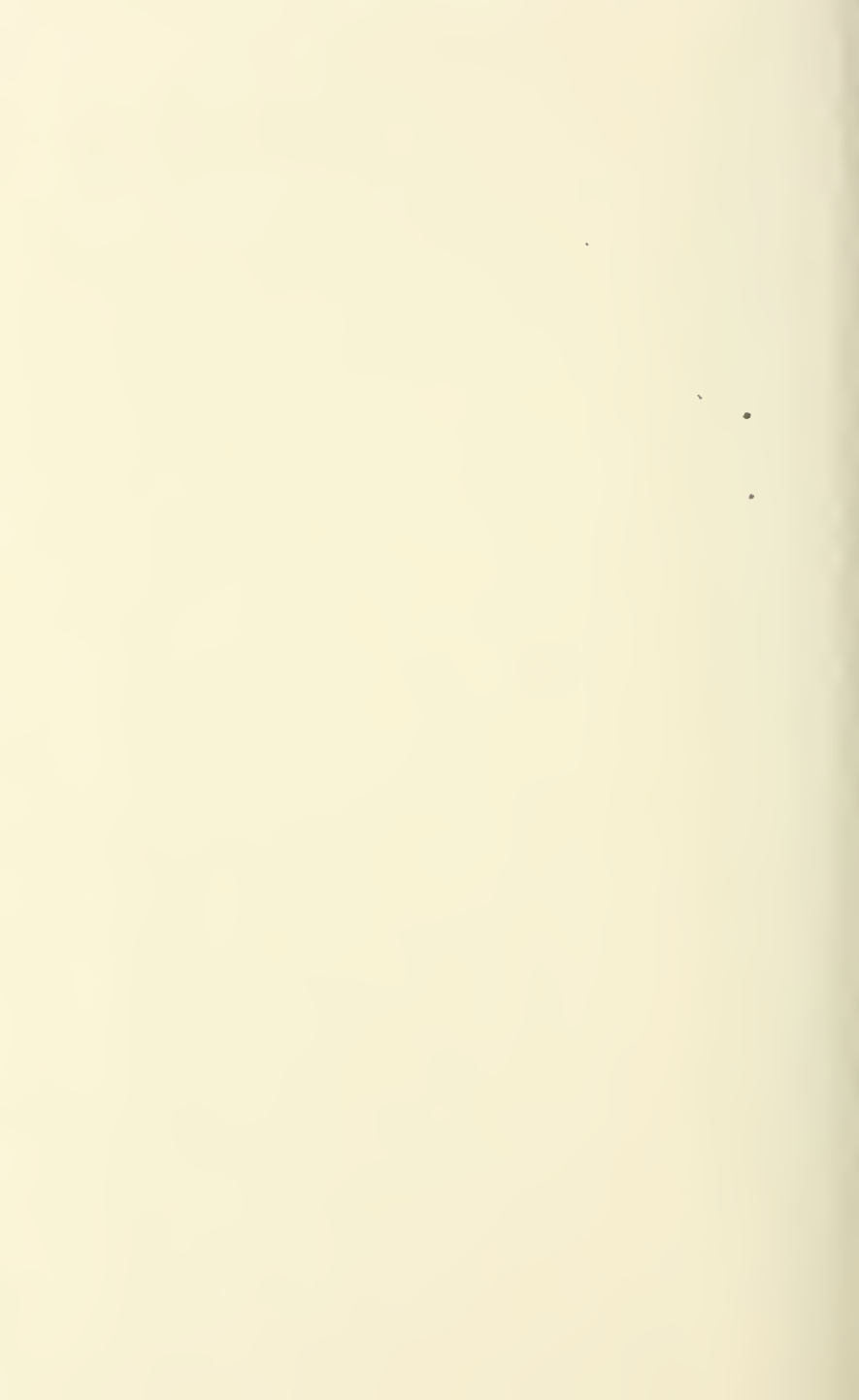
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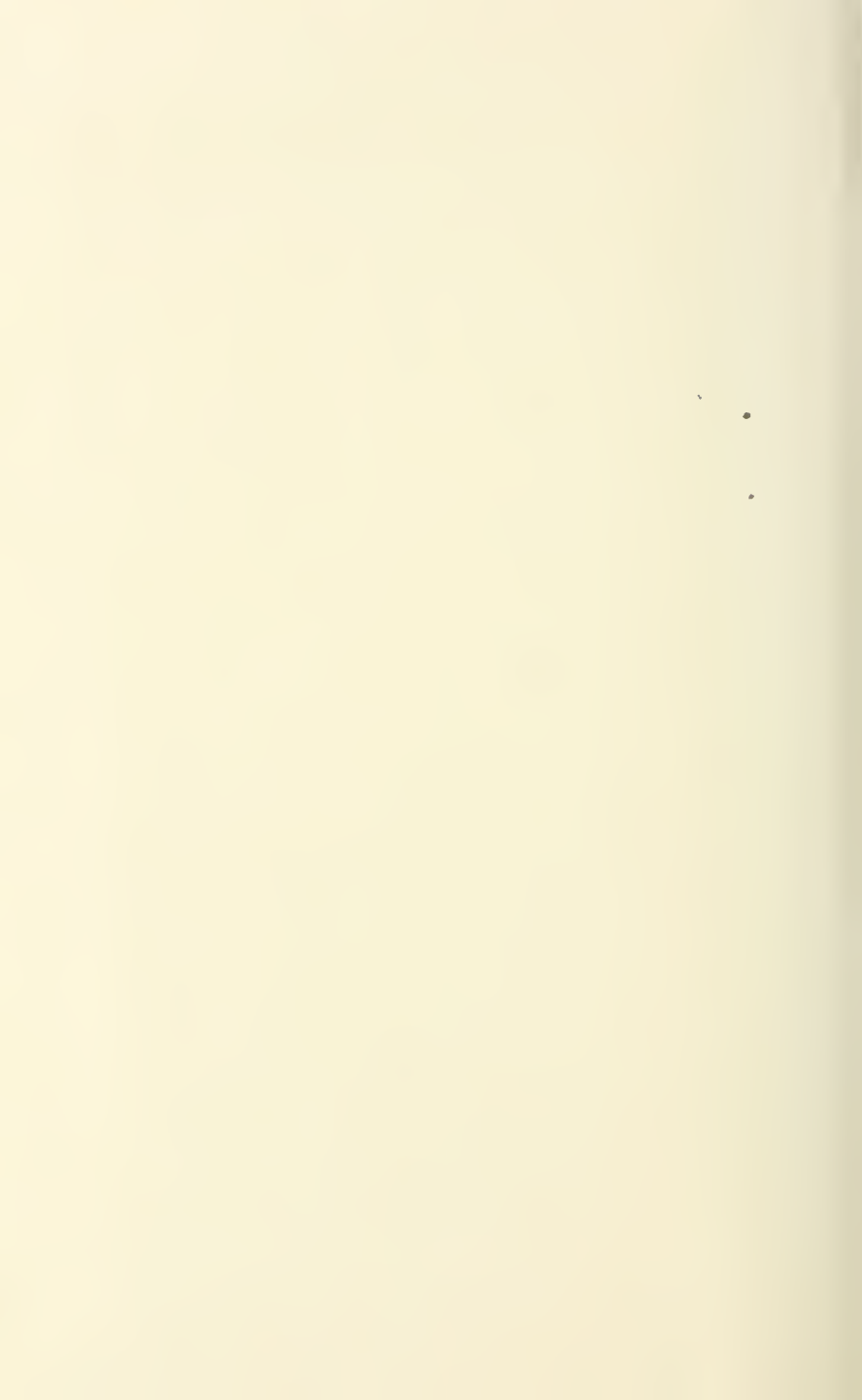




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